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INSIGHTS INTO THE CHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

Dr. K.S. NARAYANACHARYA

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KAUTILYA INSTITUTE OF
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MYSORE

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Attempts are afoot in full swing to isolate and self-alenate the main stream Hindu base of our cultural and civilizational Unity and integrity, by vested interests hostile to Hinduism, Veda and Vedic culture, both at home and their mentors abroad. This is no secret, when our own youth are losing interest in our cultural heritage. The era of Dayananda, Vivekananda, Tagore, Aurobindo, Tilak and other savants who dreamt of not only political freedom for their country, but also cultural-self-regainment in an atmosphere of freedom and expansion to its fulfilment, is unfortunately wasted and lost by thoughtless rulers and self-appointed leaders of our helpless society, misdirecting our youth to atheism, secularism, agnosticism, cynicism and forms of foreign imitations leading only to the downfall of cultural India and its great spiritual heritage. If we lose this identity there will be nothing to gain thereafter. Preventing such doom is one thing. Introspection spiritually is another thing. There has also to be a thorough reassessment of our spiritual heritage, with a focus on what alone can revitalise us. That is the job that we have to undertake now. *Please share our efforts.*

INSIGHTS INTO CHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

(A Positive Approach]

Dr. K.S. NARAYANACHARYA

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INSIGHTS INTO CHANDOGYA UPANISHAD
[A Positive Approach)
By Dr. K.S. Narayanacharya

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to

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(of Samvarga Vidya)

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Preface

The *Chandogya* is perhaps the most difficult to understand or interpret among the *Upanishads*. More than outward teachings meant for the world, it is full of instructions in **Yoga** practices, and of steps on the path the journey to God, the Indweller. The **Vidyas** taught here are not General in this sense but meant for the really serious, deserving and discerning **Yogic** novices. Unlike the teachings in *Itihasas, Puranas, Dharmasastras* and some parts of other *Upanishads*, this *Upanishad* follows strictly the **mystical** yogic approach, in the most enigmatic of languages known to the spiritualist in our tradition. The starting **Udgita Vidya** itself is a "hard nut to crack" in this sense. Translations, Commentaries in Sanskrit or vernaculrs take you nowhere, unless you have a preceptor to guide on this difficult and unfamiliar terrain.

Secondly all **Vidyas** are not meant for all ! Aptitudes, abilities, orientations change naturally. Our ancestors seem to have practiced some **one** for a full life-time for their achievements. However it is our good luck we have a good bunch of them here in one text.

That this *Upanishad* forms part of *Sama Veda* adds further value for this text. Various 'chants' described in the first chapter make no sense to anyone who does not have insights in terms of 'chants' in addition to supplements in verbal explanation. Read any English, Kannada, or Hindi translations or Commentaries to verify this truth that you are neither here nor there yourself.

Some parts may be less 'mystical' (as for example instructions regarding Food Purity, and some analogies in the **Sad Vidya**, or the instructions to **Indra** and Virochana by **Prajapati**. But again **Sadvidya** is most difficult to grasp or interpret in terms of logic for metaphysical understanding. You cannot escape metaphysics or **Brahma Sutra** if you want to 'talk' sensibly to others about the achievements of **Rishis** or their contributions to world-thought. Where you are not concerned with 'others' in thought but want to be alone on your own path of **yoga**, you cannot escape a **Guru**. **Gurus** are hard to find among mere logical interpreters! You have thus a terrible problem. You have to 'understand' the teachings in some way; be guided; make sure you are on the right path, for which cross-checking is needed in analytical, logical, discursive metaphysical base; and then proceed on your way. That way for any **Vidya** has to be the same for all those that practice it! Otherwise subjective absurdities, logical irrelevancies, self-created controversies, absurdities will plague you at every step.

That is why we had better follow the **Vakyakara Brahmanandi Tankacharya** and his **Bhashyakara**, the great **Dramidacharya**, as **Ramanuja** has done. Ignoring them and following your own way independently may acredit you with misplaced 'originality'. But lots of 'original thinking' people can be found in mad-houses too !! Tradition is a must in this sense.

I have used material here, that I myself wrote for a different context and purpose. But have added substantially later on to make my monograph as comprehensive as possible. I have avoided adding the original text as it is outside the scope of our present series. You will please follow any printed text with some translation of your choice of language for futher reading and practice.

Our next booklet will be on *Brihadaranyaka* Insights.

I thank those that have sponsored this work liberally and out of love for our ancient land.

My thanks are due to my friend Sri S. Ramasesha Sharma and the printer Sri Vinod.

K.S. Narayanacharya

Part

①

Chapter One

General

The **Vedic-Upanishadic** Hindu thought is basically mystical in approach to life, its mystery, its perplexities, problems, and paradoxes. Mysticism may be grasped as a direct apprehension of the higher or deeper truths of life behind and above the ordinarily understood or observed factors, abundantly available in unanalysed, unentertained or unquestioningly accepted routine life. For that matter, all ancient wisdom – Eastern or Western – is necessarily of this nature only. Taoism, Confucianism, the Platonic and Plotinian traditions, the Egyptian perceptions – are all of this nature only. It is only recently (since about some four or five centuries) in the West, that thought in the sense of philosophy has come to be viewed as "logical system" based on standards of coherence, adequacy, comprehensiveness and coordinated propositions. Such metaphysical systematisation is necessary, no doubt, to avoid self-contradiction and confusions in our comprehension of Experience and its contents of components. Such metaphysical attempts in India are as old as **Vedavyasa's Brahma Sutras** (about 5200 years old) and numerous commentaries on them starting from Bodhayana, down to modern-day Acharyas have come to us. These are called **Darshana Sthapakas**, i.e., those that have systemetised Intuitions into logical systems, yielding unified perceptions. Those that have established unison between Experience and their intellectual modes of comprehensions are our Acharyas. Philosophy is not generated by logic; but it is ordered into systematic grasp by logic. the basic factors that so go into such orderly systems are the Intuitions of **Rishis**. We must remember one important truth to avoid a possible error in this matter: raw, naked or nascent Experience has an implicit Unity by itself without which that experience will have no meaning, no sense or even significance to register itself in any appreciation, or any evocative response. This is an axiomatic truth requiring no elaboration or support. One who questions it will raise doubts of sensibility about him. You see a tree with numerous leaves, flowers, fruits, standing on a firm stem and spread into many branches. To see it as **one** is an experience natural enough for any common man possessed of right perceptive abilities. But to miss the **oneness** in the manyness of leaves, flowers and so on, in their varied colours, shapes, forms, tastes, functions is possible for a purely analytical approach. A botanist would question so, and even probe into this manifoldness. We are not against analysis, objections raised to confirm the felt unity of experiences as true or as required for intellectual satisfaction. In such analysed, rational, logical systems too, there is a kind of discovered **Unity** now made explicit.

Again, we must know which type of logically systematised explation is true to the originally felt unified experience called intuition. This is very, very important. It is no sin to examine, criticise, reject or improve on or substitute such metaphysical explations, as we are primrily interested in the original intuitions which cannot be violated, altered, distorted, or obscured, – as they are records of Experiences. Experiences too can be questioned only for their genuineness or fakeness, if there are false claimants to **yogic experiences**, as there is no dearth of such quacks or crooks. They too are as old as Hindu thought. But then where do you start, if you question the very veracity of experience?

There is a problem, very complex here: a **yogi** is one who receives a divine perception in a wrapt mood of concentration in **yoga**, in the ancient method. But he may not be a good articulator, trained in the art of vocalisation of it. A trance does not permit both self-experience and its explanation of meaning to someone outside too. This is at one level. But a highly blessed **Rishi**, a **Yogi,** can receive that experience and with a higher Divine Power prompting him, may come out with some articulation proper for it, in words without self efforts, without self-consciousness, without training in the arts of expression which may or may not be adequate for your comprehension; but there you are; either you take them or ignore them. We take them as our own starting point, as we believe him in his sincerity, divinity and as a receptacle of Experience vouched to him. In this sense a 'text' is Revealed, 'above human efforts' or origin, as '**apaurusheya**' and serves as our starting point as **Shabda Pramana**. (This is not the same as of Semitic claims to exclusive revelations.) It is not one **Rishi**'s experience here, but of all Divine Vehicles, whose collected testimony as grouped as one source or canon of evidence. Further, since at least the time Mahabharata events, wise men in India have tried to cross-check the interpretations of the *Upanishads* for their satisfactoriness, comprehensiveness, and truth against the other equally valid canons: *Brahma Sutras* and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Any interpretation of the *Upanishad*s must agree with the teachings of the *Gita* and the rulings of the *Brahma Sutra*s. You may press logic into service, bring in inference wherever necessary, press the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharatha*, the *Manusmriti* or other ancient texts, possibly *Pancharatra Agama* texts or any others as long as they are visions of **Rishis**, into your service. Not by selective sampling or clever omissions, please! It must be 'import to import' validations or support, viewed as one collective body of sacred thought, considered inviolable since ancient times. These texts have never betrayed the Hindu till date. Rather, they have nourished our culture and way of life like an untiring mother with care, patience, love and latitude for our ignorant lapses.

How can we go wrong when we view a point of view for its adequacy or correctness from so many varied angles? There is no need for dogma or an organised institutionalised church, a messiah or prophet here, to hold the 'erring flock' together by threats of Hell-fire, Inquisition, Jehad, Excommunication, Fatwahs, Farmans, world-conquests, compulsory congregations, political exhortions in 'Holy' precincts. Nothing is closed or sealed here. It is all open for debate, discussion – **Vakyartha** – intelligent disagreements, parting of ways decently, as views here are wedded to particular ways of living, to modes of God-realisation which is the goal of Immortality or **Amritatva** or **Poornatva** here. There is no collective salvation or Doom's Day here, naturally. There are no artificial, arbitrary rulings of interpretations by a 'High Command', from time to time, opportunistically suited to keep the 'Church' in tact, in terms of 'followers' and kafirs! So how can Hindu 'Revelation' be equated with those of closed Semitic systems? The so called 'Orientalists' in their unconcealed vested interests, concealed this important distinction, and caused confusion among generation of self-alienated Hindus down to this day in what is known as 'Macaulayism' perpetuating a still-prevalent colonial mentality.

So, the *Upanishads* are not 'philosophy' in the ready-made sense of logical system, like that of a Kant, Leibnitz, Hegel, or Des'Carte; but they are more; they are seeds of thought, whole visions, deeply felt, seen and registered experiences. Logic can go wrong, and so a 'system' may outwear itself. But universal experiences are never lost in their validity or relevance to life; so in India each work of a **Rishi** is a fresh starting point for you to find your own entry into the common pool of accumulated Hindu wisdom. You can start with *Ramayana*, whose mould is poetry, but whose heart, core is a **vision**, derived from *Upanishad*s or start with the *Mahabharatha*, *Bhagavatha, Vishnupurana, Hari Vamsha, Padma Purana, Manusmriti*, and you land at the same centre-stage of unified vision. The source is Intuitions, which are our own wealth.

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Chapter Two

Nature of Intuitions, known as 'Vidyas'

It would now be useful to ennumerate, elucidate and cross-check these Intuitions, against similar pronouncements in other *Upanishadic* texts for our free and unshackled understanding. That is the requirement today. For too long since the time of Islamic conquests, we seem to have been lost in puddles of stagnant 'understanding' of these texts as wedded to particular 'schools' and their word-for-word tie-up types of interpretations. True; they are necessary at one stage. But we must go beyond, too far, into difficult terrains of bafflements, like **Nachiketa** who dared to go into the Domain of Death to unlock the mysteries beyond death and life, into Immortality, Perfection, Regeneration as a Grand Phenomenon of life, and the assurance that nothing of value is lost in the march of life, its evolution and involution! This assurance was forcibly sought to be lost in the days of **Buddhistic** intellectual ravages over two thousand years or more, and our **Brahmanical** intellectuals were lost in meaninglsess subtleties that took us neither here nor there! A Bold **Shankara** asserted the Immortality of **Atman**, its pervasiveness, the innate dignity of man, and the validity of **Vedas** that upheld all this and more as our foundational values. But his vision too was lost in the post-**Buddhist** medley into hair-splitting arguments. To my best comprehension, **Shankara** affirmed the **Oneness** of man with the **Divine**, in the state of unison, without denying the reality of either at levels lower than **yogic**. Keep this '**experience**' in mind, and the rest – whether adequately articulated or argued out – falls into a pattern. People without **yogic** tastes of experience are carried away by false or partial logic, to fall into set-patterns of School-thinking and their never-ending wrangles with their self-identification in fallen ruts of thought. Unfortunately some words in Commentaries tend to support such partial views, as explained later in our present text. Perhaps, some bold thinker will re-interpret **Shankara** and **Ramanuja** in the light of **yoga**, and the necessity for Unified Divine Experience. Prof. P.N. Srinivasachari, and the late lamented Swamy Adidevananda, and also some others have made valid attempts. But more is urgently required.

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Chapter Three

Harmful views sought to be foisted on Upanishadic thoughts

We have now the urgent task of asking ourselves and answering them at once, some very important questions:

1. Is **Vedanta** human-centric or irresponsibly impersonal, "above values", 'amoral', "subject-objectless", so as to be aimless in its teachings, without a focus in life or locus of understanding behind? Does 'tradition' matter? Or is it above contexts or historical perspective?
2. Do we require to be told that 'God' is a human invention for the mental consumption of the 'weak-minded', and therefore one has to rise above such fictions? Is God real or unreal in unambiguous langauage, please?
3. Do we want to be told that 'man is God in reality', and that life is an illusion, that God is now man, inexplicably, requires to be cleansed of this confusion, retrieved into self-consciousness, and so '**sadhana**' is actually not active achievement of anything substantial but mere 'realisation' of a long-forgotten 'truth', lost in mystical '**maya**'? Is this the **Upanishadic** teaching?
4. Is 'Deep-sleep' the most desirable state or activity of man, the anulment of world-consciousness? If so, do we have to send all people into such 'sound' or

('soundless') sleep for as much time as possible in life, for their final attainment of salvation? Does the *Upanishad* so teach that 'sleep' is the best solution for all problems in life? If such sleep is the most natural state of man, do we not develop contempt for activity, achievement, excellence, **Purusharthas**, and organisations like the society, the State, public administration, law and order, urges like adventure, romance unto the unknown future and so on? Is such contempt the final teaching of the *Upanishads* as one body?

5. Is there no difference between **Yogic Samadhi** called (rightly or wrongly) "self-induced Trance", and the deep-sleep that an overtired labourer gets on the roadside of a market-square? Can all kinds of mind-arrest be called **Yoga**? If so – why not use sedatives, tranquilisers, anaesthesia, or even drugs? Does not the Sutrakara have a say in these matters, decisively? In short, is there no difference between quacks (say cranks) and real **Yogis**?

5 (a) Is all life predetermined for once leaving no room for human will, caprice, choice or discrimination? If so – i.e., – if some are heaven-destined, hell-destined and destined for eternal transmigration in advance of **karmic** forces to be self-generated by man, why should anybody work for any betterment? Is helplessness the final teaching?

6. Does life have a meaning? If so, can it be stated unambiguously? If there is no meaning, what is the idea of living in misery and disease? Whose creations are these, anyway? Do we want philosophers to tell us that life is no good living?

7. Are the *Upanishds* pessimissitic in import, the same as the **Buddhist** or **Jaina** views of life?

8. Is there a thing like **Upanishadic** cosmology? Does the Cosmos exist or no? Is creation (evolution, time, life, life-cycle) true or untrue?

9. Is a 'non-creational' state of Existence better than a creation-cycle? Is all life a redundant 'funding' or 'unfunding' of whatever things exist in experience, from actualisation into vanishing and vice-versa? Who benefits from this interpretation? Is this the teaching of the *Upanishad*s?

10. What is it that we call 'dignity' in man? What is it due to? How is that connected with Divinity? Is labour dignified or 'punishment' or condemnation of man into perpetual hardship?

11. Is it cooperation or competition, at the heart of life, whoever may have so planned it?

12. Is Chaos or Order the final destination of life?

13. When do we achieve one of these stops to the exclusion of the other?

14. Is culture a mirage? waste? an ornamental luxury, man cannot afford?

15. What is the meaning of struggle in life? Is it ordained, or man-made, an imposition by custom, convention or covenant?

16. What is it we call 'one-ness' of life? Where does 'variety' stand in relation to it? Are these mutually exclusive? If not, how are they reconcilable? and so on.

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Chapter Four

Urgent answers

1. All literature in words – not only **Vedanta** – but all kinds, spiritual or otherwise, is primarily meant for man's welfare by axiomatic assumption. No other meaning is either attributable or derivable. **Veda** is **sastra** – which means instruction by definition – **sasanat sastram**. If it is not human-centric, the objector has the honourable task of showing the alternative. Tradition **does** matter.

2. God is no man's invention. He is neither optional nor merely subjective. More things exist in the honoured objective world than the five senses grasp. Mind is above them. There are supramental experiences, if not common to all, at least available to **yogic**-trained souls spread over time and space. If an experience is shared by at least one person outside of himself, it is objective enough. Moreover, in all experience there is the interaction of the Subject called Self with the outer or objective world. There are no purely objective or subjective experiences outside a cracked mind.

3. If man were God, he would have no problems with himself or others. The meaning of **Upanishadic** metaphoric assertions is that there is an Innate Divinity in man, a Divine Spark; a Divine Destination. We do not have to distort **Upanishadic** definitions of God in order

to suit literal meanings forcibly extracted to suit our own *a-priori* suppositions. Definitions like:

(a) God is that of which all these cretures spring, are sustained or absorbed. *(Tait. Up)*

(b) Water is Brahman, Sky is Brahman (**Kam Brahma, Kham Brahma**) (*Ch. Up*)

(c) God is Viswakarma, who made all this out of Himself. (*Tait Samhita, & Rig Veda*)

(d) He, like a spider, wove this world out of Himself (with no secondary cause to assist Him.) (*Mundaka.* Up)

(d) All this is Brahman as all is born in Him, sustained in Him, breathes because of Him. (**Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma**, *Chandogya*)

and so on. The job therefore is for man to rise to this Innate Divinity which is at the source of creation. If you equate man with God, then you have to deny these insights or explain them away with tentative untenable meanings, reducing the world to illusion. **Sadhana** is more than realisation; it is an achievement in word, deed, thought, throughout lives, in **Janma-karma** cycles.

4. Deep-sleep 'happens' to hard-working people, even in overtired moods. This is no **yogic samadhi**. Dreamless sleep is not a 'contentless world', where subjects or objects do not matter for the time being. If there is 'nothing' there, then we cannot explain the continuity of life-experiencees, memory, recognition, continuity of consciousness, before and after such sleep. Slip-shod, naieve explanations are against the experiences analysed in psychology. Quackish explanations of serious matters do not solve deep **Vedantic** or **Yogic** problems. The

tendency to hold the so called 'nothingness' of this sleep as 'real', and the dismissal of the world of actual experience as 'sleep' or unreal has inverted all meanings of **Upanishads** for once, over centuries in **Buddhists'** hang-over of mind -set. 'Deep-sleep' as perversely-held, most desirable state, dismisses all morality, ethics, aesthetics and indeed all culture and civilisation as concoctions of mischievous minds and that is what has made our country and its culture a laughing stock today. One who does not take life seriously, can of course, remain in 'sleep' permanently, instead of coming back to wakefulness and causing all this perversity. This is not the meaning of the *Upanishads*.

5. **Yogic Samadhi** is no play-thing of quacks. It has no short cuts. It has to be achieved in eight unavoidable steps, each of which takes several lives to achieve, even according to Patanjali. The Gita is explicit on this. The *Upanishads* unequivocally say that one must first acquire Right Code of life-conduct, refrain from devious evil ways; acquire balance of mind, and self-control etc., (*Katha*). A man without strength of character, will-power, Grace of God and **Guru** cannot attain it. If you reduce this state to mere 'empty dream-less state' it would be a parody of *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* and of **Yajnavalkya**, who describes this state in three lovely analogies:

   (i) "like the bliss of embrace of a dear woman by man, her lover."

   (ii) "like the rest of a great fish after swimming a lot between the banks of a mighty river; like-wise **Jiva** attains rest."

(iii) "like a bird resting in the sky after folding its tired wings." (*Br. Up.* 4,3,18,19,21)

It is a state of Embrace of the Divine Omniscient - **Prajnya**. What happens then is beyond words to describe. All desires die there; all sins and merits melt away; all relations are transcended; all sorrows overcome; all senses asleep and so on.

Pancharatra Agama, too, **Vedic** in ordinary parlance, ignored for **Yogic** interpretations, has a lot to assist us here. **Koora Narayana Jiyar's** Commentary on the much misunderstood *Mandukya Upanishad*, and other parts of *Upanishads* attempting a coherent interpretation of states of (1) Wakefulness, (2) Dream and (3) Dreamlessness is illuminating. Few have used it perhaps.

God operates in three functions to preserve the Unity of the Individual Self and its Evolution to perfection.

(a) In the wakeful state He is **Aniruddha** (literally the "uncontrollable", the supreme force of strength) and prevents the Self from leaking away through the senses and the mind, to be lost. He keeps all activities Unified into structures of meaning, helping all **Yoga** of **Karma** and **Jnana** run into **Bhakti**. The flow of life is unchecked because of Him.

(b) In the dream state, He fulfills all the buoyant unfulfilled desires of man by creating lovely worlds of light, (so He is called **Pradyumna**) within the mind-experiences of man. Imagination and Fancy have a free play, depending on the mind's state of healthy and unhealthy, helpful and helpless desires.

God protects here, again by preserving Unity and Individuality amidst desires running amuck.

(d) In the 'deep-sleep' (**Sushupti**) state, what happens requires some elaboration, to the extent that words permit:

– God here is **Samkarshana** - as He draws the over-tired Individual Self unto Himself, (etymologically so called hence), into a world so very unlike dream and activity, so totally new, without landscape, sea-scape, airscape, without space and time considerations, and so permitting no 'cognition' or 're-cognition'.

– God so totally refreshes the soul here and rejuvenates it for the next hours of activity, desirably of **karma-yoga** nature. No one else has this refreshing touch; no one can resist this total withdrawl. **Sam** = "well", **Karshati** = "draws in". The mightiest and the weakest, are all subject to this law of "**Samkarshana**".

– There is **Consciousness** here, but only of God-bliss without reference to anything outside it, in comparison or contrast. That is why one cannot describe it; it is beyond words.

– The *Upanishad* describes it as परलोकस्थानं – "the seat of the Higher world." (*Br. Ar. Up.* 4.3.2)

– So, it is a world of "fulfilment, self-fulfilment" and of "no-(worldly)-desires" – आत्मकामम्, आप्तकामम्, अकामम्. There are no forms, no sorrows: अरूपं, अशोकान्तरम्.

– Further – Father is no father here;
Mother is no mother here;
Worlds are no worlds here;
Gods are no gods here;
Vedas are no Vedas here;
Even a thief is no thief here;
An embryo-breaker is no sinner here;
An outcaste no (longer) an outcaste;
An animal-slayer is no slayer here;
A recluse is no longer a recluse here;
A man of penance is no penance-seeker here;
He is followed by neither sin nor merit;
All his sorrows end here, leaving his heart.

(*Br. A. Up*. 4.3)

That is to say that worlds of opposites disappear here, vanish, leaving unspeakable Harmony, Homogeniety and Perfection without shades of cacophony.

Qn: *Is there total loss of consciousness, or is there any left, or a new consciousness generated or promoted?*

– The *Upanishad* assures:
"There is no loss of sight of the Seer ......
There is no loss of smell of the Smeller .....
There is no loss of tongue-taste of the Taster .....
There is no loss of speech for the Speaker ......
There is no loss of hearing of the Hearer ....
There is no loss of mind-functioning of the mind functionery ....
There is no loss of touch for the Toucher ......

- but it is all of a "different kind" from those experienced in the world of duality, controversies, perplexities, paradoxes, anxieties, sorrows, fears and so on.
- For there is only **One** (**Samkarshana**) so to experience, **One** without a second. Like water poured into water, there is homogeneous embrace, 'Oneness' promoted of a kind you never thought before. This is **Brahmaloka** where one is Supreme Emperor-**Samrat**.

Qn: *If there is still 'consciousness' there, beyond all one has experienced earlier, outside, what is there to be conscious 'of' and 'by'? What happens to the subject? What is the nature of the 'object'?*

Ans: When the subject is deeply 'absorbed' into the object, like a "dear and beloved in embrace" as described earlier, your question is irrelevant. Even in aesthetic experience it so happens that you forget yourself, the music-hall, the musician, the instruments, your wrist watch, your other engagements and a hundred ties knawing into you, till then. You are there but you forget yourself. The object – God – is there, and you are aware only of the Bliss of His Embrace. In a way, you are **one** with Him, without loss of identity. What is lost is aggressiveness, eccentricity, and angularity.

See **Yajnavalkya's** own example, in an earlier context:

(a) A huge drum is being rhythmically beaten; you are not aware of any sound other, outer, than that, then.

(b) A conch is being blown, reverberating **OM**, and you are lost in it, to the total loss of consciousness outside it.

(c) Someone is playing on the **Veena**, very sweetly in ecstacy and you are lost in its elevating bliss, forgetful of all else.

(*Br. Up.* 2. 4. 7.8.9)

So, how can you bluff that it is a state of "total emptiness?"

– Either you have not read **Upanishadic** texts properly, or you have no taste of **Yogic** experience; or else you have fallen into the trap of the **Buddhists** and are making cheap a divine experience, difficult to attain.

Qn: *What then is the difference between an ignorant man's 'deep sleep', and a 'trance' of the Yogi?*

Ans: We have answered it in detail already. But to be cryptic: the ordinary man does not 'know', cannot 'price', or make 'anything' out of it. God is within, in revelation. He does not know, as he is untrained. But a **yogi does know**, can price it above all else, and feels fulfilment. He actually is in a state:

- negatively, unburdened of the world's weight,and positively fulfilled with God's Bliss.
- Satisfied?

5(a) **Predestination:** This is a phenomenon we generally observe in physical nature. Newton's laws of motion, and properties of matter we read about in Physics do not change, as matter is lifeless and therefore lacks individual will, caprice, choice and descrimination. Man is no matter, though he possesses a material body. The battle in man's personality is between material forces pulling him down because of **karmic** effects, and physical potencies in terms of **Gunas** and an innate spiritual upward pull towards liberation and attainment of Immortality, assisted by God, Grace and **Guru**. To miss this is to miss the central teaching of Vedanta. Heaven and Hell are **not** permanent destinations for specially favoured and specially condemned ones. This metaphysical ideology is Catholic, Calvinism. True, some among us also speak in this way. The idea is better put this way: On the path to Immortality, there is no salvation as long as **Tamasa** or **Rajasa gunas** dominate in anyone. For those who do not seek God through **Bhakti** or **Prapatti**, **Karmic** forces toss them up between heaven and hell, and in endless lives of transmigration. All this can be ended by true Knowledge and performance of Surrender and living a life dedicated to God. Otherwise your objections are mine too, or anybody else's too

6. The meaning of life is that it is a laboratory of self-evolution. Sage **Yajnavalkya**'s ruling is noteworthy:

   (1). "Lead me from Chaos to Order,
   (2) Lead me from Darkness to Light,
   (3) Lead me from Death to Immortality." (*Br. Up.*)

   This is the cry of all living things – even plants and animals, microbes and all other forms of life. There is not merely Evolution, but also Involution. Outward progress in body, mind and senses in terms of purification must help the inward **yogic** journey towards **Anandamaya** from **Manomaya** through **Vijnanamaya**. The rest of life as misery-stricken, sorrow-bound etc, are due to **Karma**. They can be overcome. We do not require perverts to tell us that life is no good living. It is obvious enough at the dense levels of ignorance.

7. *Upanishads* are most optimistic. Read the **Shanti mantras** at the beginning of each of them. If there were no hope, there would be no need for any instruction in this matter. Silence would have been better.. The confusion is because of (1) - Westerners who confuse between **Buddhist** teachings and those of *Upanishads* because of overlapping terminology. (2) - Even so, **Jains** and **Buddhists** too speak of Emancipation from sorrow, although the nature of Release varies in all of them. *Upanishad*s do not advocate any contempt for life. They only point out its transitory nature, although with abundant opportunities for self-perfection.

8. We live in a very real Cosmic scheme, of which our world is a tiny molecular speck. Creational accounts in **Vedas** and **Upanishads** are accurate even in terms of science:

    आकाशात् वायुः ।
    वायोरग्निः ।
    अग्नेरापः ।
    अद्भ्यः पृथिवी ।
    पृथिव्या ओषधयः ।
    ओषधीभ्योऽन्नम् ।
    अन्नात् पुरुषः । (तै. उप.)

    Space → Air → Fire → Water → Earth → Vegetation → Food → man and other species etc. Some creational hymns are symbolic in meaning and involve myths which are not meant for literal understanding. The overinterpretation that man is God in reality, and that there is 'no fall', 'no evolution' etc., in any Absolutistic manner has necessarily led to the under-estimation of Cosmology and its explaining away. This is perversity 'pure' !

9. *Vedas* and *Upanishads* do talk of a non-creational state of Cosmos, as latent in God as **Avyakta** as in the **Nasadiya sukta** of the *Rigveda* (10th **Mandala**). No one can describe this state. The 'child' is in the wish of its mother, as a brilliant possibility, and is yet not 'actual'. It 'is' and 'is not' in two different senses. How the actual material world, extended in name and form, came to be, is the crux of 'causation' as a metaphysical concept, as in the **Sad Vidya** of our present *Upanishad*. This is what **Veda Vyasa** discusses in the **Anumanikadhikaranam** of *Br. Sutras*. Analogies like the 'Serpent' in the 'rope' as a hallucination are outside the **Upanishadic** body of literature. They have another set of ideas contrary to the reality of life as advocated here. How the **One** becomes the **Many**, and the **Many** merge into **One** are too serious matters to be taken lightly. If Emergence is actual, it has to be from a Super-Intelligent, Blisful Agency like God, not a mischievous Matrix called mindless matter as **Sankhyans** advocate. It is not a 'mental figuration' as **Yogachara Buddhists** view it. Nothing of value is lost, nothing is totally lost in a chain of meaningful evolution. So **Illusionism** is against our **Vedic, Vedantic** spirit.

10. **Human dignity:** Good question indeed. The physical human body by itself is mute, opaque, unconscious, **Jada**, and has no capacity even to remain unified in its 5 elements making it up, except when inhabited by the Soul, or Self. This self is self-luminous – **swayam prakasha** – and illumines the body through the senses

and the mind and all other motor organs. It is this that invests the body with dignity, so to say. In its ideal, liberated state (which is for us now no more than a mere 'abstraction', as we cannot separate it from its composite personality) the soul can see, smell, hear, touch, taste etc, without sensory organs, or function without motor organs. The *Upanishads* and the *Gita* are explicit. Further, the Soul can so function or retain its self-luminosity or Immortality, only because of God, within it, as **Antaryami**. The final sense of human dignity is because all bodies are inhabited by similar selves, whose bodily associations vary due to **karmic** effects in the chain of self-causation. This does not mean that a "dog = elephant = a Brahmin = a meat eater" and so on. In spite of bodily degradations, if you see the soul in each, you can be moved by pity and a sense of self-equality is stimulated in you. A soul is a soul in whatever condition. That is the due dignity.

Secondy, all labour is dignified if dedicated to God, as **karmayoga**. It is no punishment as in Christianity. It is a means to God, if you so fashion it. All socially sustaining activity is Divine – without a 'low' or 'high' sense. This should answer critics of **Varna** or **Ashrama**. Labour cannot be and should not be a source of unrest or revolution or bloodshed. **Bhikshu Angirasa Sukta**, of the *Rig Veda* (10th Mandala), the **Anna Sukta**, the second verse of *Ishavasaya Upanishad* extol work as divine and propound a kind of 'socialism' without violating in-built inequalities in nature in the chain of evolution. This is not the same as **Marxism, Leninism, Stalinism, Maoism** and various spurious Indian brands born out of ignorance and 'Colonial mentality'. Unity is because of God, variety is because of **karma** and the human choices behind. Where is the quarrel? Perhaps we should also answer here an unasked question about the validity or otherwise of Humanism. This is a social way of worshipping man for all his faults, blemishes, short-comings, and substituing him for God, in a wave of debunking Religion because of atrocious practices of Christians, Catholics in Europe. Erasmus and others revolted against the 'otherworldliness' of Christian theology which was a hoax and hypocrisy and another name for exploitation and political empire-building. We cannot love God second-hand – can we? Why should we have contempt for this life, and for man? Semitic religions hold man in utter contempt and so somehow, someone had to revolt. In Europe Humanism ushered in Science, Arts, Adventure, Curiosity and a host of activities aimed at making life worthwhile.

Where it went wrong was in denying Divinity and the 'other world' of values; new absurdities were reached in Communism and new forms of Materialism.

In Hindu thought there is no need for these extremes.

Also there is this to note: man is not an adequate object of worship, attention or admiration. If you do not heed this caution you will land in the most regrettable miserable position of worshipping man for his very faults, lapses, evils, blemishes and varieties of short lived glories, or even barbarities of dictators and despots. That has happened in Russia and China! "The Super Man" concept does not elevate or relieve as does the contempt of God. At the same time you must avoid concepts like the Semitic Allah, Jehova, Zeus and other despotic notions, and evolve civilized, elevated notions of God's Love, Compassion, Super-Abundant, Plenitude of Peace and Harmony and Hope. Only if you have such and such an elevated idea of God and human soul, can you maintain human dignity. In philosophical systems with God as a despot, or as a human invention, with the world as illusion, and the Individual soul tripartitioned into heaven-bound, hell-bound, earth-bound or as an illusory phenomenon – you cannot dream of the idea of human dignity. Moreover 'dignity' is itself a soical concept, relational in assumption. Non-relational systems cannot understand the term. It does not 'matter' there at all. In an undignified body for which you have only contempt, it would be a travesty to talk of 'dignity'. So 'matter' must have some dignity too, some divine purpose, divine use, and in association with God, as His instrument. This, you can never imagine in **Sankhya**, **Jaina**, **Buddhist** or materialistic systems of thought. Semitic thought has no scope for it. Totalitarian ideas like Communism talk emptily of it, without providing scope for it in their structures of thinking. All talk of 'dignity' is public-fooling on enormous scale here, and critics have exposed it.

11. Cooperation, or Competition?

The cosmos reveals a grand planning on an unimaginable scale, where evolution, involution, absorption, new forms of identities to replace the time-served ones in an ever evolving pattern of novelty and change in a hopeful direction – are all implicit to the unprejudiced scientfic eye. Science means more than physical sciences. The science of harmonisation, discovery of ever emergent meanings, of adjustment and understanding too is Science. Here, nothing needs to compete with anything for 'grabbing', 'gobbling', 'exploitation' or 'ego-dominance'. Harmony, cooperation, functioning in expected circles of activity are all that you can see, till you are tired. Take the human body itself as a Federal System: the respiratory system, the digestive system, the blood-supply, circulation system, the several functionings of the senses, motor organs – all function **autonomously**, and without competition. They are inter-connected, and any faulty functioning of one affects all others in the chain. There is a spiritual 'mechanism' of Unity too, invisibly connecting and supervising them all. It is the same for all humans. Similar ones exist for birds, animals, plants, insects and even microbes. The Universe requires several such systems to make it full, One, function meaningfully. Laws govern physical matter, bio-matter, ecology, human life in all its aspects. We call them **Dharmas**.

It is the world of Ego, selfishness, dominance and tendencies of meaningless destruction that are at struggle with this process of harmonisation. Even in this struggle between Good and Evil, it is the good that triumphs to be absorbed into the next stages of novelty ever emergent. The Hindu view calls it **Devasura Yuddha**. Our present *Upanishad*, starts with a brief account of it even in the enunciation of the **Udgitha** vidya. (I-2) How even the Breath was sought to be broken by the Demons, how it all failed, is symbolically described here.

The idea is this: Cooperation is a natural divine plan. Competition is because of Ego, which is demoniac and so unnatural, self-defeatist. But perhaps this may also be needed from a higher view to strengthen goodness, and make it bright, emergent and valuable in contrast.

The economic, social, political struggles of history must all be viewed from this **Vedic, Vedantic** angle for a comforting coordinated and comprehensive meaningful interpretation. Nature is seen to have distributed natural resources of wealth, climatic conditions for food growth, vegetation, animal life, water resources, varieties of talents among people of different parts of the world in such a way that we can infer cooperation as naturally envisaged and not competition. However, competition for betterment can be accomodated within cooperation itself – not destructive competition, or a brutal one, promoting violence, hatred and extermination. Nobody competes in breathing air, drinking water, eating food, acquiring clothes. Bloody competition involves hoarding, power-struggles, acquirement of unnatural amounts of wealth, social status and to hold destinies of vast sections of humanity under one ideology or another, empire-building, colonisation and keeping parts of the world in all manners of thraldom. This is always at the root of upheavals in history and human misery on large scale.

12. Chaos or Order?

We have already answered this question by saying that we are in an evolving world. Chaos is the other pole, that from which we start. The goal is order. This seems to be implicit in every moment of time's movement.

13. When do we achieve?

Perhaps when time stops and space merges itself into it, when there is nothing more to achieve. It is an ideal. To forget it is to fall back on practical brutality.

14. **Culture** is no mirage. It is an ideal waiting for actualisation ever in our hands. That is the lure for history as a movement. However vandalism, its other pole functions like darkness for light, in every epoch of history. We must take courage and go on building. The strength of culture is this courage, and faith in the Immortality of values that keep it strong and active.

15. The meaning of struggle is that life is not ready made, but an achievement over death and other destructive agencies. Success is ordained – सत्यमेव जयते – but defeat is man made, and happens when the will to win is weak, when idealism is a glimmer, and when the animal in man gets the better of the gods in him. All this is explained in the *Upanishads themselves*.

16. **Oneness** is a mysterious sense of totality of meaning for all Existence. It is to be grasped by the trained, idealistic, inward eye. The unintelligent man sees only leaves, twigs, branches, flowers and fruits in a tree, severally. But a sensible one sees **Oneness** in it. So also in a nation, in the human body, on a printed page of matter, in a profound book, and everywhere, indeed, every moment. Manyness is what persists to the naked uneducated eye. But oneness is what is achieved as meaning by training, intelligence and a synthetic imagination. मनसैवेदमाप्तव्यं नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन – says the *Upanishad*.

More can be seen if you rise to heights.

Chapter Five

Rare Insights

Rare insights worth further probing by the higher faculties of mind, in profound moods of meditation are scattered all over the Upanishadic literature. They form our **Vidyas**. (Full explanation to our reach of understanding and verbal orbits, can be seen further, in later Chapters.) Some examples in advance may be mentioned in a skeleton-line sketch to pinpoint particular attitudes in word-mapping.

1. God with handsome eyes, ochre-robes, blue body, and divine resplendence is described in the **Antaraditya Vidya** (in Ch I-6). This is not a fiction to fool the dullards, but the word of **Shruti**. Such God-form can be seen in the orb of the Sun. That is what we try to see during **Madhyanhika Sandhya**, our daily **Upasana**. That is the **Vedic** mode of worship, meditation. It is a part of **Sandhya** observation, to which less importance is attached today, in the **Buddhist** confusion to catch the uncatchable **Nihil** which does not respond to anyone!

2. At II-2.3, the *Upanishad* says that **Dharma** stands firm on the shoulders of three divine practices:

   (Self) Sacrifice - यज्ञो
   Study - अध्ययनं
   Charity - दानानि

3. Long before Copernicus and Galileo, our *Upanishad* states:

   “**The Sun neither rises, nor sets**”

   This is there in the **Rig Veda** too. Geophysically it implies the movement of the earth around the sun, and the time scale of **360 days** of a year, accounting for 360 degrees of a circle, and the circular, clockwise movement of planetary bodies, has a bold reference in the **Veda**, there. (*I*-164)

   Spiritually it suggests the Immutability of God and the Imortality of the individual soul also, perhaps. More is to be probed by divine meditation. This is part of **Madhu-vidya** (III-11) of our present *Upanishad* and the **Vidya** in its totality itself is worth probing.

4. Come to **Shandilya Vidya** (III-14,15). It reveals that “all this” – that there is in life, all creatures, living and nonliving, is **Brahman**, God – in the concept of “**water**” – जल. But why? Because All is emanation from Him, जायते, and therefore it is “**Ja**”, and further absorbed into Him, लीयते, and therefore He is “**La**” = “**Jala**”. Further all this “breathes” (अनिति) in Him. So He is “जलानिति”. “All is God” does not mean the Western ‘Pantheism” literally. This is the same as the *Taittiriya* perception.

   यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते,
   येन जातानि जीवन्ति,
   यत्प्रयन्ति अभिसंविशन्ति, तद्विजिज्ञासस्व तद्ब्रह्मेति ।–

   meaning the same, literally as GOD – **G** for “Generator”, **O** for “Operator” or “Organiser”, and **D** for “Destroyer” (Absorber) as someone explained it wittily. God comprehends **all** in the state of existence. Nothing exists without Him as Indweller, nothing moves without Him as propeller, encourager, actuator, motivator, Impeller, Advisor, Elevator, and nothing is lost into dust, triviliality, nothingness and blank as He saves all that there is for a brighter destination. There is assurance here, comfort, hope, and light for the infinite future, infinite lives of each evolving soul. This sums up all **Vedanta** in a way, fixes the direction of interpretation and provides an unforgettable insight into the future and past of life from an angle of present. It lays the bedrock foundation of value, and stands firm against miserable interpretations of life by the **Buddhists**, **Jains**, **Sankhyans** and Materialists of all hues and shades. No **Acharya** has the scope for a different interpretation. It is one of the most fundamental and unifying insights and runs through concepts of **Avataras, Leela, World-Purpose**, the other **world** of Eternity and the hope of Immortality. More is left for our meditation.

Look at the **Phalashruti** – benedictory benefits.

(a) It gives long life to your son,
(b) Wealth,
(c) Breath-strength, and bestows
(d) attainment of higher worlds.

Further it states unequivocally that He is:

1) मनोमयः,
2) प्राणशरीरः,
3) भारूपः,
4) सत्यसंकल्पः
5) आकाशात्मा

6) सर्वकर्मा
7) सर्वगन्धः
8) सर्वरसः
9) अभ्यात्तः
10) अवाकी
11) अनादरः

"God is of great mind", "Breath is His Body", "He possesses a resplendent form", "He has unfailing will power", "Sky is His Soul", (untainted, unselfish purposes are His), "He is the All-Doer", "He possesses the most auspicious odours of a Divine Nature", "He is all Divine Tastes in one, leaving nothing excellent", "He is All Pervader", "He does not speak in perishing words of alphabets like us", "He has no special choice for the arbitrarily selected good, nor aversion for the ill-chosen evil – He is equal to all" and so on.

5. Take the **Purusha-Vidya** insight now. It reveals the very heart of **Yajurveda**, the **Yajusha Tattva** that man must lead his whole life as a continuous self-sacrifice as dedicated to God in discipline, bodily, mentally, and spiritually, holding breath-control as the key. The ritualistic sacrifice is a mere metaphor from this rare spiritual angle. If you cultivate this 'eye', everything that you do as ordained by nature as food-eating, drinks like milk, honey and holy-waters, rest, work-routine etc., all will correspond to items in the ritualistic sacrifice, in an elevated spiritual correspondence. Do this, life long, in happiness, fulfilment and with purpose. Either you dedicate it to **Lord Krishna, Devaki-putra** (who is named here) or follow His example as He practiced this **Vidya** among all those taught in the *Upanishads*, and

lived long in His Mortal Incarnation and showed us the way, by precept and practice. The *Upanishad* indirectly suggests that *Bhagavad Gita* is an actual expansion, an essay in elucidation of this **Vidya**.

6. The **Samvarga Vidya** describes the "Backward Journey" of a **Yogi**, by rolling all faculties through the mind back unto Him in a pack. It specifies that for such a Yogi, even if near or dear ones do not perform the last obsequies, Immortality is assured.

7. The **Panchagni Vidya** describes the "Forward Journey", the actual passage of man to this world by a "five-fold filtering" from rain clouds unto a woman's womb. Life or birth is no accident, it tells. There is **karma** behind, and ambition and initiative, before. Man is a lone traveller between birth and birth, through various lives of animals, reptiles, vegetation, gods and demons of all shades – it tells.

8. The **Vaishvanara Vidya** endows you with a rare **Visvarupa** image of God, with Fire as His Head, Earth as His Foot and so on. In "Flash-Back", it recalls the "Purusha-sukta" image, the "Vishnu-sahasranama" perception and illustrates the dictum – एकं सत् विप्राः बहुधा वदन्ति – and so on. He is our "leader", "path-finder" and so corresponds to all that the Holy Name **Narayana** teaches, reveals and makes available in Yoga experience.

9. The **Sadvidya** devotes itself to the metaphysical view of Causation and stands as a deterrent to those that tend to view Creation as Illusion, Fiction, mind-made, in various acts and angles of partial logic. What Western philosophers describe as the problem of "**one** to many,

and many to **one**" as a foundational metaphysical question, metaphysical quiz, metaphysical mystery, is dealt with here in lovely analogies in the course of explanation of the coordinate proposition तत् त्वम् असि . Even so, unfortunately there are divergencies and devious explanations, bringing in unintended "imports". God is the sole cause: all that is required for cosmic creation is in Him. He is "them" in a metaphor. The text:

पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ।।

of *Br. Ar. Up* is indirectly elaborated here, illustrated here. The **Br. Sutrakara** has done a fine job on this intuition, as the base of **Vedantic** grasp.

10. There is **Bhooma**: This insight introduces us to God who is greater and mightier than all the elements, the mind, the intellect and other faculties of the Universe. Meditation on this Highest alone can bring us lasting peace and nothing smaller than Him.

11. Among other things this *Upanishad* teaches that human temperament itself can be tempered, altered, shaped into the highest mould of **sattvic** condition so as to tune ourselves to God and attain Him. This is through the consumption of "right food". No man is entirely **sattvic**, **rajasic** or **tamsic**, as all nature is mixed. Evoloution through body is a must. Food purity therefore is an **elemental** discipline.(VI-4.5). The hard part of undigested food is to pass out as waste, refuse; the lighter aspect is absorbed into bone, pith and marrow; the fluidy, oily, juicy part is consumed into blood; and the vapourous aspect is absorbed into the mind.

आहारश्रुद्धौ सत्त्वशुद्धिः,
सत्वशुद्धौ ध्रुवा स्मृतिः,
स्मृतिलंभे ग्रंथीनां विप्रमोक्षः ।

"Food-purity causes purity of stuff;
Stuff-purity leads to **Bhakti** as experience possible;
Bhakti can release you of all shackles binding you to
sorrow, birth, ignorance, misery, triviality."

These are just a few, culled out insights. For the rest you have to master the whole *Upanishad* itself, to which the next part is but a small introduction.

◆

Part

②

Preliminary

Chapter One

The *Upanishads* are considered as the greatest mystical expressions of the highest spiritual wisdom of the Hindus, constituting the basic texts of **Vedanta**, amplified by the *Bhagavad Gita* and intellectually, systematically expounded and ordered into a sound **Darshana**[1] called *Uttara Mimamsa* without internal contradictions and impregnable against attacks from heretic systems of thought as well as protected from misleading misinterpretations from within the **Vedic** fold itself, in what are known as *Brahma Sutras*, as guide. Therefore, one cannot understand the true import of the *Upanishads*, which by themselves do not yield any 'system', apart from seemingly haunting contradictions at every step, abundantly, without the **Sutras**.

The logical or intellectual mind of man cannot grasp easily the unity implicit in a synthetic experience or its expression without a persuasive agency or grand clues to experience the 'wisdom' which is the very breath of **yoga**. Experience, thus, comes first, expression next, and ordering it into a unified mass of meaningful articulation is the final task of a philosopher, a **Darshanasthapaka** in the Hindu tradition or context. This is entirely different from Western attempts to understand Reality in the systems of Hobbes, Lock, Des'Carte, Kant, Hegel, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Whitehead and other great 'thinkers' to date. None of these has the wealth of articulated wisdom of 'visions' behind them; they are actively guided by their own 'free thinking', their own rationality, their own adequecies or inadequecies of acquired data whether from schemes discarded earlier, or from discoveries in physical or biological sciences, or speculative capacities endowed by Nature. Systems, there, are therefore not attached to particular ways of living, forming communities and are also, many times, arm-chair luxuries, bearing little influence on character or conduct or approaches to God in attempts to individual Realisation. Philosophy, there, is separated into Religion, Ethics, Political Science, Sociology and so forth, while in India, all these are considered as divergent branches or applications of the self-same 'Vision' (**Darshana**), not meant to contradict conclusions one may derive severally from the self-same source of Experience of wisdom of the sum-total Reality of life, and things beyond life. Adherence to the *Upanishads* as the common stock of 'evidence' (data), in our tradition, does not smack of 'dogma' as in Islam or Christianity, as *Upanishads* are open to examination, logical verification, acceptance or rejection, reconciliation with similar or dissimilar utterances elsewhere, and tests of veracity against objections from heterodox schools of thought. All that the Hindu asks is : "Start from this body of revealed utterances, as so much given data; this is also actual experience, which can be yours also, if you wish to own it on examination. It is a ready body of texts to enhance and enrich your own actual experiences, which may be low, poor or even unelevated otherwise, as you may not have been exposed to these heights of vision or altitudes of experience of the **Rishis**[2]. The *Upanishads* are 'revealed' texts in the sense of flashes of Light received by the uncorrupt souls of pure sensibilities, whose truth or otherwise is open for examination or reconciliation in methods layed down by the science of semantics known as '**Mimamsa**'. This sense of 'revelation' requires to be distinguished from the claims of Semitic texts to infallibility, an examination of which would entail death or excommunication upon the inquirer, by the body of the clergy who have the whole and sole monopoly of interpretation of those texts. The word 'scripture' in the Semitic context is of entirely different meaning from our '**Shruti**' which means '**what is heard**'. 'Hearing' and 'Seeing" mean the same in the Hindu context of received revelations, as the legacy of spiritual wisdom. But if you see what liberties have been taken by our 'system-makers', '**Darshana Sthapakas**', with respect to these texts, in attempts to harmonise them, order them into coherent systems, you will understand our sense of 'revelation' better. One of the **Upanishadic** texts[3] goes so far as to say: "Here the **Vedas** no longer remain as further guides to what you can seek, as you have to go beyond, alone".

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[1] **Darshana** literally means a 'vision' vouched to a seer, an 'experience', wholesome in itself in which all that a **yogi** has found is bequeathed to posterity. It is not a mere abstract 'system', in propositional language.

'Para Vidya' and 'Apara-Vidya'

Here it would be necessary as well as useful to note a very important distinction between a text as a 'guide' or 'aid' to meditation, and the actual experience one obtains by self-efforts

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2. **Rishi** means 'seer', 'visionary', an extraordinary personage endowed with knowledge of the past, present and the future. A sage given to penance and austerity as way of life.

3. **The Brihadaranyaka:** "अत्र वेदा अवेदा भवन्ति". The literal meaning is "Here the **Vedas** cease to to be **Vedas** as revelations." This is no self-invalidation! But you can't imagine this in the semitic texts or contexts.

or by the Grace of God, through those aids, until the point of actual experience. Unfortunately, some commentators have messed up matters so much here and produced horrible insurmountable prejudices, attached to particular schools of thought, that you risk being branded as a 'revolutionary' if you shed those prejudices. The matter is worth mention and explication herer for a true grasp of the concept of Vedic 'revelation'.

The text occurs in the *Mundaka Upanishad*:

I. (1) Shounaka approached Angirasa formally and asked of him: "Sire, which is that **One** by knowing which all this varied, multiple universe is known?"[4]

Note that the question is about '**One**'. But the answer is: "There is a **two-fold** 'wisdom' (**Vidya**, in the dual sense) both of which are to be acquired. The **Brahman**-knowers say since yore, that one of them is the **Higher** (**Pára**) and the other is the **Lower** (**Apara**)".

Question: *If the object of knowledge or experience desired is* ***One****, why should there be* ***two*** *approaches? Why should both be designated as* ***Vidyas****? Why* ***one*** *is branded as* ***Higher****, and the other* ***Lower****? What is the standard for such label or grasp? If the* ***Lower*** *one is really negligible or to be discarded, as some commentators hold, why does the Upanishad respectfully mention it also as valid, to be acquired or gone through? Is it a case of two-fold gradual steps, after all?*

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[4] Please note that it is the same question that is asked at Chandogya 6-1, and that is instrumental for the understanding of the famous text "**Tat Twam Asi**". This is to show that *Upanishads* may be many, but topics are the same, the teachings are the same, though language and mode of teaching may vary. One and only complex body of teachings thus is the primary source or guide to God -realisation here.

And what are those two **modes** or **steps**, or **aspects**, or **types** of **Vidyas**?

(1) The *Upanishad* dumps all lore in words and expression: **Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, Atharva Veda, the auxiliaries of Shiksha, Kalpa, Vyakarana, Nirukta, Chandas, Jyothisha, Itihasa, Purana, Nyaya, Mimamsas, Dharma Shastras** - into the 'Lower' category,

and (2) Upholds that other **Vidya** which is a direct means to the attainment of Brahman, the Immutable (**Akshara**) as the Higher.

A proper understanding of the relation between the two is really called for here, to avoid dangerous confusions.

Answer:

Sri Ramanuja discusses this question at **Br. Sutra**. I-2.23, in his *Sri Bhashya*, and points out that the two are actually **two** inevitable steps of progress — (1) a textual grasp leading to a (2) final personal experiential grasp. This is on the basis of a *Vishnupuranam*[5] text, which but describes a natural order of Brahman realisation, from (i) an **Indirect** understanding through textual teaching by a preceptor, leading to (ii) a **direct** experience at a later, maturer stage.

The full text of *Vishnupuranam* can be summed up as follows:

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[5] तत्प्राप्तिहेतुः ज्ञानञ्च कर्म चोक्तं महामुने ।
आगमोत्थं विवेकाच्च द्विधा ज्ञानं तथोच्यते ।।
शब्दब्रह्मागममयं परं ब्रह्मविवेकजम् ।...
द्वे वै विद्ये वेदितव्ये इति चाथर्वणी श्रुतिः ...
शब्दब्रह्मणि निष्णातः परं ब्रह्माधिगच्छति ।। (VI - 5 - 60 to 65)

“To a person moving round and round in cycles of birth, age and rebirth[6] and sorrow, the panacea is the attainment of God, finally and ultimately. Its characteristic is that it excels all other forms of bliss, and places one everlastingly in the Bliss without bounds. Wise men should try to allow it while still in the body and life. The means to allow that wisdom, that act, that leads to it can be said to consist in two steps: first the acquirement of all verbal guidance inherited by tradition - the literature that contains recorded **vidyas**, called **agama** - and next, the actual experience of **vidya**, personalised in individual **yoga**”.

Thus, (1) There is ‘knowledge’ obtained through **Shastra**;

(2) There is ‘direct knowledge’ which requires no further guidance or proof, or dependence on spiritual testimony at that height, or point of Brahman-realisation, but which is reached/reachable only through the earlier exercise of scriptural study.

This is also the view of **Manu**[7].

Guidance is necessary until you arrive at where you want to land. Guiding literature is however **indirect** and is therefore **apara**, only when you receive the direct experience. So both are **Vidyas** only. The Upanishad is by no stretch of mischievous imagination setting direct knowledge of God against verbal testimony; but all *Upanishads* have conceived it as a gradual two fold movement.

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[6] गर्भ जन्म जराद्येषु स्थानेषुप्रभविष्यतः । .... (*Vishnu Puranam 6.5,59)*

[7] मनुरप्याह वेदार्थं स्मृत्वा यन्मुनिसत्तम । (V.P. 6.5.63)
The point to note is that the rival view “that **‘apara’ vidya** is only **avidya**, and is therefore worth only rejection” is both untraditional and dangerous. (See **Shankara** on this **Mundaka** text.) Even atheists like **Buddhists** can and do outrageously claim to have **Brahman** or the ultimate experience, while rejecting **the Vedas**!

Sri Ramanuja's caution

There is an erroneous view held by some **Vedantins** that for **Brahman**-attainment, no textual study of the *Vedas* is needed at all! Most of that literature is ritual-centred, worship-centred, and falls into the category of **apara vidya**, which one has to transcend in the final leap. So why insist on a study of this wasteful literature? Actually the acquirement of some four useful guidelines would do, for the novice. They are:

1. a sense of firm discrimination between what is eternal and and what else is ephemeral.
2. acquirement of self-control through disciplining of the outer senses, and the internal organ called mind, leading to peace, equanimity, power of endurance and so forth.
3. a sense of detachment from the desire to enjoy worldly pleasures.
4. the desire to become free of all bondage.[8]

If so, a study of the *Vedas* would be futile, and your view will lead to dangerous conclusions and consequences violating the grammar of reality, experience, concepts of knowledge, progress, semantics and even common sense!

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[8] These are: (1) नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः
(2) शमदमादिसाधन संपत्तिः
(3) इहामुत्र फलभोग विरागः
(4) मुमुक्षत्वं । (This is the view of **Shankara**)

Chapter two

Nature of 'vidya' explicated

Let us say someone wants to go to a place he has not visited before – say, Delhi, Central Government Secretariat, for an interview. He comes to you for guidance, as you know the exact placement of the venue of the interview. You give him a picture of the location, by drawing figures, making pen-marks, and arrows to guide him from street to street, floor to floor, roads to avoid, circles to meet, turns to the right and left, and finally a Delhi map, and a railway guide. All this is **indirect knowledge** for him, as well, until he arrives at the exact spot, where-onwards, the knowledge becomes **direct** and he no longer requires further guidance. Next time he may not need it at all. This is so, for all, moving from non-knowledge into true knowledge. It is also like the use of a ladder for a man climbing up a wall. The aid **is an aid** right at the beginning. Without it one may go astray, miss his destination, and land somewhere else. This is common sense; this is the grammar of progress in experience; this is promotion of knowledge, and is within semantic understanding too. Miss it, and you become a Bohemian, and even hallucination, swoon, aberration and hoax can be claimed as **Brahman**-experience, as is being done today by self-declared **yogins**, wedded to notorious ideas of **Nihil**, 'Mind-emptying yoga', and 'Enlightenment without God'[9]. Do you want this?

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[9] which is indeed the bulk of highly markted books!

Therefore guidance and check are both needed; that is the use of **apara vidya**, which does not lose its status or nomenclature just because you outgrow its use at some stage of your progress. It does not become **avidya**, just because a cranky yogi or philosopher abuses it, under an over-enthusiasm of **Vidya** as he understands it.

What is vidya?

From the root '**vid**' = 'to know', we arrive at the meaning that **vidya** is a form of knowledge. The Sanskrit word is **Jnana**. But what type? Is it mere 'information'? Bookish or textual knowledge? Is it analytical or discriminatory, logical knowledge? Is it synthetic, unitive, or aesthetic type of enjoyment as knowledge? Is it **wisdom**, finally that dispels all darkness of doubt and despair, despondency? Is it a positive **wisdom** of the nature of Bliss and Delight supreme, that fills the entire personality of the **Sadhaka**[10]? Is it meditation of the nature of 'empty mind'? free of mean thoughts, feelings, and minor mind-creations? Is it **Bhakti** as ripe vision of God? Is it 'worship' as a ritualistic process? Is it a preparatory or cleansing process before you become aware that you are verily **Brahman**? Is it a final destination? or a mere trasitory station? **Sri Ramanuja** discusses this question threadbare in the **laghu purvapaksha - laghu siddhanta**[11] part of the **Jijnasadhikarana** of his *Sri Bhashya*, to arrive at the conclusion that **Vidya** is "actual experiencing of **Brahman**", denoted in **Upanishadic** terms such as **vedana, dhyana, upasana, jnana, nidhinyasa, darshana** and so on. It is not mere textual expertise. Nor is it a product of instruction through some four major texts - the so called **mahavakyas** like – **'Tat-Twam Asi'**, **'Ayam Atma Brahma'**, **'Aham Brahmasmi'**, to the total exclusion of all else in **Vedic-Vedantic** instructions awaiting attention, reconciliation and synthetic understanding. All statements of the *Upanishads* are equally true, valid, consequential, weighty and a distinction between a 'Major statement" and a "Minor one" is not merely unwarranted but also mischievous. It has no tradition behind or **mimamsa** validity, and the consequences are contemptuous of the whole **Vedantic** literature. Besides, even these 'four' fall into **apara vidya** or **avidya** in the final count of those who propound such a theory.

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[10] a 'seeker', an 'effort maker', 'one on the way for spiritual fulfulment'

[11] **"A minor objection, and a minor conclusion"** - part relating to the nature of **Vidya**, taught by all *Upanishads*, and explained in the *Br. Sutra* in a string, in Ch. 3 called **Sadhana Adhyaya**. There is no such thing as 'realising the attributeless Brahman', or a method for it, anywhere in the *Br. Sutra*.

See also this 'dual step', the reaching of the 'higher direct experiencing' through an initial, 'lower, or indirect experiencing' throughout the **Upanishadic** teachings:

1. "**Anuvidya, vijanati**"
2. "**Vijnaya Prajnam Kurvita**"
3. "**Brahmavid apnoti param**"
4. "**Nichayya tam mrityumukhat pramuchyate**"
5. "**Atma va are drashtavyah, srotavyah, mantavyah, nididhyasitavyah**"
6. "**So anveshtavyah, vijijnasitavyah**" etc., which mean:

1. "a **Brahman**-seeker has recourse to repeated attempts to know Him by continuous hearing, continuous chant, and continuous guidance before he directly comprehends him."
2. "Know Him first by hearing about Him and then by direct, concentrated grasp."
3. "One who is an adept in **Vedantic** exegesis can only attain Him."

4. "Search for Him, and then issue out of Death's mouth for final liberation."
5. "It is God of whom you have to constantly hear, see, mentally grasp, concentrate and finally visualise."
6. It is He who is to be sought after and understood.

Sri Ramanuja shows the concurrence of ancient thinkers hailing directly from **Veda Vyasa** to this effect. The great **Brahmanandi Tarkacharya**[12] says:

1. "**Vedanam Upasanam syat tadvishaye sravanat** |"
2. "**Siddham tu upasana shabdat** |"
3. "**Upasanam syat dhruvanusmritih darshanat, nirvachanaccha** |"

meaning:

1. "The word **Vedana** is the equivalent of **Upasana**, as we hear of both terms in contexts of God realisation."
2. "The use of the term **Upasana** establishes this meaning only."
3. "**Upasana** means 'enduring remembrence'[13] in the **yogic** posture or exercise as is so understood traditionally, by etymology and inherited teachings."

This **Vakyakara** is understood as belonging to **Atreya Gotra**, and is said to have left a brief commentary called **Vakya** - 'statement' - on either the *Brahma Sutra* or the *Chandogya Upanishad* (as the latter contains as many as 20 **Vidyas** out of the celebrated total of 32), as hailed by tradition.

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[12] Who precedes **Shankara**, infinitely behind, by epochs.

[13] The term "**dhruvasmriti**" occurs in our present **Chandogya Upanishad** itself at: 7.26.2: "It is by pure **sattvic food**, one attains purity of the stuff of mind; this alone leads to staggering and steadfast concentrated vision of God."

He is known as 'Tanka' (which probably is not a proper name, as it means a 'chisel', and thus this appelation is also meant to be due to his incision, cryptic pronouncements in his text, 'chiselling' out hidden meanings, in easily graspable formula-like language and his original name is **Brahma Nandi**, i.e., "one who is settled in God-Bilss.")

It is this **Vakya** that the famous **Dramida Bhashyakara** expounds and explains further in his celebrated *Bhashya*, an elaboration, annotation; both the **Vakya** and **Bhashya** are said to have been extant till the time of **Vedanta Deshika**, and subseqently lost somewhere during the turbulent periods of Muslim conquests like those of Mallik Kafir and Tughlakh. It is interesting to note that **Shankara** too shows acquaintance with both texts in his works, though the views are divergent, and helpful in **Ramanuja's** way of understanding the tradition behind.

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Chapter Three

Celebrated 'Brahma Vidyas'

Celebrated '**Brahma Vidyas**' are usually listed as below, though there are variants, additions and subtractions in some traditions making up the final 'thirty two', somehow:

1. **Antarditya vidya**
   — य एषोऽन्तरादित्ये हिरण्मयः पुरुषः etc., - छान्दोग्य (1. 6.6)
2. **Akasha vidya**
   — अस्य लोकस्य का गतिरित्याकाशः - छान्दोग्य (1. 9)
   — अकाशो ह वै नामरूपयोर्निर्वहिता - छान्दोग्य (8.14)
3. **Upa Kosala vidya**
   — या एषोऽक्षिणि पुरुषो दृश्यते - छान्दोग्य (4-10)
4. **Gayatri vidya**
   — गायत्री वा इदं सर्वं यदिदं किञ्च - छान्दोग्य (3-12)
5. **Dahara vidya**
   — अथ यदिदमस्मिन् ब्रह्मपुरे दहरं - छान्दोग्य (8.1.1)
6. **Panchagni vidya**
   — तद्य इत्थं विदुः येचेमेऽरण्ये - छान्दोग्य (5-10)
7. **Param jyothi vidya**
   — अथ यदतः परो दिवो ज्योतिः दीप्यते - छान्दोग्य (3-13,7,8)
8. **Prana vidya**
   — यो ह वै ज्येष्ठं च श्रेष्ठं च वेद ज्येष्ठश्च ह वै - छान्दोग्य (5.1.1)
9. **Bhuma vidya**
   — यो वै भूमा तत्सुखं भूमात्वेन विजिज्ञासितव्यः - छान्दोग्य (7)

10. **Vaishvanara vidya**

— इममात्मानं वैश्वानरं - छान्दोग्य (5-11,24)

11. **Madhu vidya**

— असौ वा आदित्यो देवमधु - छान्दोग्य (3-1)

12. **Shandilya vidya**

— सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म तज्ञलानिति शान्त उपसीत - छान्दोग्य (3.14.1)

13. **Samvarga vidya**

— वायुर्वाव संवर्गो यदा वा अग्निः - छान्दोग्य (4.3.1.4)

14. **Satyakama vidya**

— सत्यकामो हि जाबालो - छान्दोग्य (4.4.9)

15. **Sadvidya**

— सदेव साम्य इदमग्र आसीत् - छान्दोग्य (6.2.1)

16. **Akshara vidya**

— अथ परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते - मुण्डक (1)

17. **Akshistha Satya Brahma vidya**

— सत्यं ब्रह्म यश्चायं दक्षिणे अक्षिन् - बृहदारण्यक (5-7)

18. **Anandamaya vidya**

— तस्माद्वा एतस्माद्विज्ञानममयात् अन्योऽन्तर आत्माऽनन्दमयः
- तैत्तिरीय (आ. 5)

19. **Ishavasya vidya**

— ईशावास्यमिदंसर्वं - ईशोपनिषत् (1)

20. **Antaryami vidya**

— यः पृथिव्यां तिष्ठन् - बृहदारण्यक (5.7)

21. **Ushasti Kahola vidya**

— न दृष्टेर्द्रष्टारं पश्येः - बृहदारण्यक (5.4)

22. **Gargi Akshara vidya**

— एतद्वै तदक्षरं गार्गी ब्राह्मणा अभिवदन्ति - बृहदारण्यक (5.8.8)

23. **Jyotisham Jyoti vidya**
    — तं देवा ज्योतिषां ज्योतिराहुः - बृहदारण्यक (6.4.16)
24. **Paramapurusha vidya**
    — यः पुनरेतं त्रिमात्रेणैव ओं इत्यनेन - प्रश्न (5.5)
25. **Nachiketa vidya**
    — यस्सेतुरीजानानां अक्षरं ब्रह्म - कठ (1.2)
26. **Nyasa vidya**
    — वसुरण्यो विभूरसि - तै नारायणीय (51)
    — यो ब्रह्माणं विदधातिपूर्वं - श्वेताश्वतर (6)
27. **Paryanka vidya**
    — अमितौजाः पर्यङ्कं ब्रह्म विद्वान् - कौषीतकी (1)
28. **Pratardana vidya**
    — सहोवाच प्राणोऽस्मि - कौषितकि (3)
29. **Balaki vidya**
    — य एष विज्ञानमयः पुरुषः - बृहदारण्यक (4.1.16-17)
30. **Maitreyi vidya**
    — आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः - बृहदारण्यक (6.5.6)
31. **Vyahriti vidya**
    — तद्यत् सत्यमसौ स आदित्यः - बृहदारण्यक (7.5.1)
32. **Angushta Pramita vidya**
    — अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषो मध्य आत्मानि तिष्ठति - कठ (2.4.12)

This list follows the one given by Mahamahopadhyaya Kapisthalam Desikacharya in his *Adhikarana Rathnamala*. It does not include the famous **Purusha Vidya** that Sri Krishna was taught by **Ghora Angirasa** (from *Chandogya*, at 3.17) or the one at the end of Tait. Narayaneeyam, that we all recite everyday while concluding daily worship.

A slightly different list is offered by the Jeeyar (H.H. 41st Pithadhipathi) of Ahobila Mutt, in the beginning of his Preface to **Deshika's** *Adhikaran Saravali*, with the Commentaries of **Kumara Varadacharya** and Sri **Attipatu Azagiya Singar** of Ahobila Mutt.

Sri Alkonda Villi Govindacharya of Mysore gave one at the end of his English translation of **Sri Ramanuja's** *Gita Bhashya*.

Shri Setlur Narasimhacharya gave one as an appendix to his Commentary on Desika's **Hastigiri Mahatmya**, adding translations in Tamil of the respective **Upanishadic** texts.

Sri R. Narayana Aiyar wrote a specific book called *Brahma Vidya*, enumerating and translating them to English some seven decades ago.

There may still be other versions with differences in the Dwaitic and Advaitic traditions.

When we realise that every word of the **Veda** or **Upanishads** is a **mantra**, meant for **manana**, (meditation) and is therefore a **Vidya** in its right, the number does not matter, nor their order or place, or omission or your commission. Particular aspirants of their respective inherited branches of **Vedas** and **Upanishads**, simply got them by legacy, and followed them. To me, a follower of the Taittiriya branch, **The Anandamaya Vidya**, or the **Bhrigu Varuni Vidya** (as the *Upanishad* itself designates it) may be enough by choice or inheritance, or the **Nyasa vidya**, at the end of *Tait Narayaniyam*.

Some discuss with fervour whether **Nyasa** or 'surrender' as an alternative for **Bhakti** as one of the 32 modes of **Upasana**, as our Acharyas maintain, is yet a **vidya** at all. The question is that if it comes under **Vidya**, it is available to only the three higher **Varnas** while, if it is an alternative open to all - women, common folk and even those outside the pale of **Varnas** - it ceases to be a **Vidya**, and thus cannot form an alternative. This is elaborately discussed in the *Shrutaprakashika* at "**Nanavidyadibhedat**" (*Br. Sutra* 3.3.56). What is important to note is that though **Vidyas** may be many, and choices depend on tastes of the **Upasakas**, the fruits thereof are the same, - attainment of **Brahman**, and enjoyment of "that experience chosen" through particular **Vidyas** of God with specific attributes as described in those respective **Vidyas**. Such experience is beyond space, time, deformity, extinction and is therefore eternal, everlasting, immutable and immortal.

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Chapter four

'Vidya' - correlated to Bhakti yoga, Ashtanga yoga, Adhyatma yoga and its importance in the Chandogya context

It is interesting to read an anecdote at the end of our present *Upanishad*, wherein **Narada**, the **Devarshi**[14] approaches **Sanatkumara**, with a question as to how to overcome sorrow, which is a large part of our life. **Sanatkumara** questions him about what sorts of knowledge and how much of them has **Narada**[15] acquired, to which the latter replies that he has acquired mastery over all scriptural texts in 'words' - **Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, Atharva veda, Itihasa, Purana** and all else including astronomy, warfare, logic, **Garuda vidya, Agama, music**, black magic, medicine, grammar, etymology, mathematics and what not. But he has no peace of mind or contentment, or has not overcome a sense of 'want', sorrow, unsettlement and depression. He confesses that he has heard that one who has 'known' Atman or 'experienced' Brahman, only, can overcome such sorrow. Could he be **intitiated** into it? guided to it? taught it? instructed about it?[16]

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[14] A **rishi** among gods, a repository of all spiritual knowledge;

[15] **Chandogya** 7 - all 26 parts

[16] This set of questions takes us again back to the difference between **Para** and **Apara vidyas**, emphasising unity of thought in the **Upanishads**

The result is the teaching of **Bhooma Vidya**, which is a **yogic** experience in the mould of 32 **Vidyas**. The anecdote teaches that mere mastery of textual knowledge is not enough, until it leads to actual self-experience of Brahman, which is the very point that **Sri Ramanuja**, emphasises in the *Sri Bhashya* in the **Laghu Siddhanta**, section.[17] We have already mentioned the importance of this two-fold step of progress in our earlier discussion of the inter-relatedness of **Para** and **Apara Vidyas**. The additional point of importance to note here is this:

One school of **Vedanta** holds the extreme view that **Brahman** or His experience is altogether beyond the grasp of even **Sruti** texts,[18] as It is Self-Evident[19] and any attempt to describe It in words can only distort it into the lower **Brahman**, dismissed contemptuously as **Saguna**, whose experience is only 'Savikalpa'ka or 'artificially induced'; the other is unmade, undirected, uncharacterised, and totally beyond words, and all mundane 'grasp' - grammar, logic, etymology, semantics or any kind of teaching or external aid, even of the **Vedic** exigesis. The 32 **Vidyas**, in this view, fall into the lower category of **Saguna** Brahman-realisation, while the **Sutras** and the **Upanishads** behind them do not teach anything beyond these, of the so called Higher Category! Unfortunately this over-interpretation and over-liberal view entails upon us a whole set of insoluble, un-resolvable contradictions and a veritable **Dualism** against the much-sought-to-be-protected **Monism**, which cannot be arrived at by any known methods of philosophy, accepted evidences, and modes of realisation including **Vedic Yoga**. See these consenquential confusions:

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[17] अविद्यादिनिवृत्तये वेदान्तवाक्यैर्विधित्सितं ज्ञानं किंरूपमिति विवेचनीय - किं वाक्याद्वाक्यार्थज्ञानमात्रं, उत तन्मूलमुपासनात्मकं ज्ञानम् इति । न तावत् वाक्यजन्यं ज्ञानं .... अतो वाक्यार्थज्ञानादन्यदेव ध्यानोपासनादि शब्दवाच्यं ज्ञानं वेदान्तवाक्यैर्विधित्सितं । तथा च श्रुतयः .....

[18] the view of आत्यान्तिक अवाचित्व

[19] "स्वतः प्रमाण" वाद

You have:

1. a lower **Brahman, Saguna**, meant for the 'dull-witted', undaring and a higher **Brahman, Nirguna**, meant for the bright-minded, daring ones.
2. a set of lower **Vakyas, Vedantic** statements, of no consequene, meant for popular consumption, to appease the dull-minded only, pointing to **Brahman** with characteristics, and which you have to dismiss in the final count by the **apaccheda nyaya**,[20] and a set of higher ones, of paramount realisation, pointing to the **Higher Brahman** beyond characteristics.
3. a **mukti** (release) while in body, called **Sadehamukti**, possible for the daring, called **Jeevanmukti**, and a lower one called **Videhamukti** (beyond the body) involving actual spacio-temporal movement into the world of Eternity.
4. Reality graded into
    - (a) **vyavaharika**
    - (b) **pratibhasika** and
    - (c) **paramarthika**

i.e., - a 'reality' that concerns, or applies to the work-a-day world, as far as it goes, but which does not have final validity, ever-lasting value, as it is ephemeral;

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[20] This is a misapplied **Purvamimamsa** view, which prescribes that in the Soma sacrifice, for omissions, commissions, lapses and excesses, the higher **Prayas-chitta** or expiatory rituals, if carried out, will automatically invalidate the other lower expiatory ones, if any. A pickpocket who is also a murderer, if hanged by a court order, does not have to be punished again by a fine or imprisonment! This is a different context: Monists hold, similarly, that 'Higher' statements in '**Sruti**' negate the lower ones. It is like taking as much wood of a tree as is necessary for an axe-handle, to cut off the rest of the tree!

- a 'reality' which is phenomenal, that simply 'appears' like a 'dream', a superimposed impression like the 'serpent in the rope' (proverbially), whose reality you can neither accept nor deny; it is both 'IS' and 'IS Not' **Sadasad anirvachaniya**;
- and 'reality beyond these passing ones, that is unmade, sef-manifest, beyond the need of proofs, silent, ineffable, eternal, pure, all-conscient, which you have to realise silently, without travel, travail, shipwreck, desert-experiences, which is all about you; you do not have to seek it outside you, except attempts in shedding off all that which is wrongly attributed in the 'Neti Neti' logic

and so on.

Our pointed question is whether any of the *Upanishads* teaches these categorisations, these analogies of 'Serpent-and the Rope', or these invented distinctions, in any kind of texts - **causational**, pertaining to **Sadhana**, or **Mukti** contexts. Is there anything beyond the taught **Vidyas** as aids to Experiencing God yourself beyond? Monists who hold these views, to date, maintain that the world of our actual expeience, is 'actually' unmade, a mere illusory experience, caused by Nescience or **Avidya**, hanging on as a 'dream', as a mere 'super imposition' (**adhyasa**) on an Immutable Reality which is **Brahman**, which is self-luminous, self-conscient, self-existent - **Sat**, **Chit**, **Ananda** - and Self-Bliss. (Not the

'Blisful', but a mere 'Bilss'.)

Sri Ramanuja has raised some seven major objections against this 'appalling' view (**Sapta vidha Anupapatthiah**), more than some nine hundred years ago, which none of the proponents have been able to refute, though some feasible voices have been raised recently (in English.)[21]

They can be listed as below for our brief comprehension.

1. **Ashrayanupapatti**
2. **Tirodhana anupapatti**
3. **Svarupanupapatti**
4. **Anirvachaniyanupapatti**
5. **Pramananupapatti**
6. **Nivrittyanupapatti**, and
7. **Nivarthakanupapatti**

Anupapatti means the non-tenability, non-acceptability of argument. These arise in the context of the Monisitic view of causation that Brahman becomes the **Jivatman** by the super-imposition of **Avidya** or Nescence. If so, face these counter arguments:

1. What is the basis or **locus** of **Avidya**? (**Ashraya**)? You cannot say **Jeevatman**, for it is not yet formed, and is actually the result of **Avidya**. This would lead you to a 'vicious-circle' of 'Avidya first?' or 'Jivatman first?' (**anyonya ashraya dosha**) - you cannot say **Brahman**, as it cannot be the base for its own **swarupa nasha** or self-eclipse?

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21. Dr. S. Balasubraminiam, Ex. Dieector, Dr. S. Radhakrishan Institute, Madras University has written a Monograph, Pub: Motilal Banarasidas, New Delhi. This contains no new arguments, but repeats the same old earlier views of **Chitsukha**, **Sri Harsha**, and those of **'Ishtasiddhi'**kara and other pre-**Ramanuja** proponents of the view.

2. You cannot say **Brahman** wishes to self-eclipse its own Nature. Nothing can cover up what is self-luminous. **Avidya** does not have that power, on your admitted grounds.
3. Even if that happens, then **Brahman** will lose its Natural Form - 'swarupa', or Essential Nature.
4. You cannot say that **Avidya** neither **IS** nor **IS NOT**. This is an escapist's view! How can a thing have this double possibility? on what logic? If its nature is **Bhava** = being, then, to the problem you add a new dimension and admit that to produce the world both **Brahman** and **Avidya** are primary causes! That would destroy **advaita** and land you in **dvaita**! On the contrary if you maintain **avidya** = as an **abhava** (non-presence of knowledge), then it can produce no such effect as you maintain, as it does not exist. Hence you maintain the tangle and rush to run away from its explanation.[22] (To admit that **Brahman**'s volition or will produces this '**maya**', illusion, is to admit that it is **Saguna**; you are trapped!)
5. Where are the evidences, textual - **Upanishadic**, or in the **Gita** or *Br. Sutra* - logical, inferential to show that your view of **Avidya** is the cause of **Brahman** becoming **Jivatman**? Is it available at least in actual direct experience - **pratyaksha**? Why should **Brahman** resort to such self-'coverage'? What motive? If you say **leela** or sport, does it entertain,

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[22] **Sri Satchidanandendra Saraswathi** Swami of Holenarasipur says that this view of '**Avidya**' is a later invention of **Ishtasiddhi** – writer, upheld by **Vachaspati Mishra** and others, but not the original view of **Shankara**, who simply meant that **Brahman** becomes **Jiva** out of its own volition or will needing no intermediary agency.

produce bliss or ignorance? What use is **leela** for one who is Perfect, self-fulfilled?

6. Let us admit for argument's sake that **Brahman** becomes the **Jiva** under **avidya**. That would mean He loses self-luminosity, **svayam prakasha**. How does **Brahman** then regain His original nature? **Swarupa nasha** is an irrepairable damage, done to eternity, and this amounts to **Brahma nasha** - which is worse than the **Buddhist**'s 'Nihil' or the **Charvaka**'s view of 'No God'.

7. If you say that **Brahman**, after all, **does** have the power to regain His true nature, pray name that **Power**! What is this extraordinary sourse of self-recovery? which *Upanishad* has named it? Which Vedantic predecessor holds this view?[23]

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[23] **Sri Vedanta Desika's** *Shatadushani* has further elaborated these into formidable formulations, and they are available with the Commentary called *Chandamarutha* by **Mahacharya Swamy** *alias* **Doddiah Acharya** (Pub: Chowkambha). Some sixty years ago, **Sri Anantha Krishna Sastry** of Madras wrote a *Shata Bhooshani* as an answer, but was refuted by **Uttamuru Viraraghavacharya** in *Paramartha Bhushanam* by **Annangaracharya** in *Shatabhushani Kuthara*, also by **E.S. Varadacharya** of Mysore **Parakala Mutt**. No further aggravation!

Chapter five

Coming out of the cobweb of unnecessary contradictions

Thus, this other path of understanding the **Upanishadic Vidyas** is ridden with interminable tangles, confusions and contradictions, and takes you nowhere. Thibaut, who has translated the Commentaries of both **Shankara** and **Ramanuja** into English in the *Sacred Books of the East* series founded by Max Muller, says as much, in clear unequivocal terms, in his elaborate **Introduction** to the first volume of **Shankara**'s *Bhashya*.

Vidya is a spiritual enlightenment. It requires the firm philosophical ground of understanding in the so called **Apara Vidya** as a guide.

(a) There are no two **Brahmans**, one for the dull-minded and other for the daring. **Saguna** and **Nirguna** ways of description are complimentary as the **Ubahyalingadhikarana** of *Br. Sutras* maintains.[24]

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[24] (3.2.11) **Ubhaya Linga** means 'two fold'-wealth of **Brahman**'s characteristics: to say "He is the abode of all auspiciousness' is a **positive** description. To say "He is devoid of all blemishes, shortcomings, lapses .." is a **negative** one. This is how **Saguna** and **Nirguga** mean the same. **Brahman** is always possessed of these sets of characteristics - says the **Sutra**.

(b) All **Vedic** statements are equally true and equally valid. All **Vedantic** statements are mutually complimentary, and do not require to be set against each other. The **Apaccheda Nyaya** is out of context and outside the purview of the **Vedantic** semantics as its limited use is in the **Karma Kanda** of **prayaschitta** context only.

(c) **Mukti** is only beyond the human bondage in an extraordinary world beyond space and time; tastes of that Bliss, no doubt are available in moods of yogic **Trance (Samadhi)**; but are transient, and so cannot be considered as permanent **Mukti**.

(d) It is treachery to introduce grades into Reality. It has no logic, no precedence, and is calculated to invalidate all experience into unreality, in the final count. It is precariously oriented to the Jain view of **Syad Vada** or the **Saptha Bhangi** view,[25] and further stands in the direction of the **Yogachara** or **Vijnana Vada** of the **Madhyamika Buddhists**[26] to discuss Creation, Reality and experience in preference to the Nihil beyond words, beyond activity and beyond all that we know as Culture or Civilization. Besides, in this view, one does not know the means to connect or communicate from one plane to another. Still further, where do we stand, when we discuss **Brahman**? If from

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[25] This is a view that there are seven angles of looking at things, in permutated combinations of **IS** and **IS NOT**. Nothing is totally wrong or right. All are possibilities.

[26] This **Buddhist** view maintains that the world is a mischievous misfiguration, or concotion of the **mind** or **antahkarana**, and truth lies between 'opposites' as a Golden Mean. Finally everything is unreal, so what we have is only grades of unreality. Nihil is the Final Truth.

> **Paramarthika**, then communication may not be needed there, as you have reached Reality beyond doubt, and you do not have a 'second' to whom to communicate. If from these planes of less and lesser realities, you must prove the validity of means of communication, and actually communicate to contradictory fields of experience. It is like a man in 'dream' communicating with a man in 'deep sleep' or a man in wakeful state talking to a man in dream and so on. Life can only become a mad-house on this assumption.

Let us therefore be free of all these cobwebs once for all while trying to understand the nature of **Bramha Vidya**.

What we call '**Vidya**' is 'Intuition', 'direct apprehension', **Brahma Sakshatkara**, **Aparokshanubhuti**, **Yogic** experience, known severally as **adhyatma yoga**,[27] and obtainable in eightfold stages of efforts of **tapas**, called **ashtanga yoga**, or **Bhakti yoga**. The latter-day **Patanjali yoga** owes its origin to this root only, though with some reservations, as for instance it makes God an optional centre of meditation.[28] **Veda Vyasa** rejects this system along with **Samkhya**.[29] Both do not hold that God is the sole cause of world-creation, but say He is a mere 'witness' or supervisory, super-added reality. By meditating on what is not the cause, you cannot have 'release'! (कारणं तु ध्येयः !) 'Bhakti' is a form of 'knowledge', a 'form of Love' for the Supreme.

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[27] The term is found in **Katha Upanishad** 2-12. The Gita refers to it as **adhyatma**.

[28] "**Iswara Pranidhanadva**'; "the intended result can be achieved **even** by concentration on God, or **upasana** or **pranidhana** (which also means 'worship', 'prostration'.)

[29] 'ऐंतेन योगः प्रत्युक्तः' (*Br. Sutra* 2.1.3) "we reject **yoga siddhanta** for the same reason for which we rejected **Kapila Siddhanta**.

Bhaktishabdascha Jnana visheshe vartate |
Bhaktisch preeti vishesh eva | [30]

– defines **Ramanuja** in his *Vedartha Samgraha*. Its form is defined as:

(1) ब्रह्मप्राप्त्युपायश्च शास्त्राधिगततत्वज्ञानपूर्वक -
स्वकर्मानुगृहीत भक्तिनिष्ठासाध्यानवधिकातिशय -
प्रिय विशदतमप्रत्यक्षतापन्नानुध्यानरूपपरभक्तिरेवेत्युक्तम् ।।
(*Vedartha Samgraha*)

(2) ध्यानं च तैलधारावत् अविच्छिन्नस्मृतिसंतानरूपम् । भवति
च स्मृतिः भावनाप्रकर्षात् दर्शनरूपता । सेयं स्मृतिः दर्शनरूपा
प्रतिपादिता । दर्शनरूपता च प्रत्यक्षतापत्तिः । एवं रूपाया
ध्रुवानुस्मृतेः साधनानि यज्ञादीनि कर्माणि .... etc.,
(*Sri Bhashayam, Laghu Siddhanta*)

Meaning: (Summary)

(1) "The means to attain **Brahman** is **Parabhakti** only; that is what we have established hereby. That experience is of the nature of a 'vision', excessively dear, clear, of the nature of bliss beyond words, continuous in its repetition or persistence. It is possible to achieve it by a steadfast devotion to God, by discharging duties due to one's stage (of evolution in **varna** and **ashrama**), and based on scriptural knowledge ripening into a wisdom, gradually".

(2) "Meditation is of the nature of uninterrupted vision, an experience steady in its flow like the constant pouring of oil, without termination or blocking or

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30. Towards the end of **Vedartha Sangraha**, (p. 44, Kanchi Edition) unevenness; for, 'remembrance' or 'memory' can acquire the form of highly projected or elevated, exalted feelings. This type of remembrance is certainly of the nature of vision we have established. That indeed is 'direct perception'. For the attainment of such permanent remembrance, the means are like sacrifices (mentioned in **Upanishadic** texts.)"

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Chapter six

Ancient masters and their corroborative views

Tankacharya Brahmanandi, mentioned earlier as the **Vakyakara**, prescribes seven major disciplines as steps to achieve and keep up this continuous experiencing of God and **Ramanuja**, quotes these (as against a 'new four' by the monists of the day.)

They are:

1. विवेकः[31] (Food-purity, as untainted by association with foul persons, lower gods, colour, smell etc)
2. विमोकः[32] (to keep free of vulgar desires, including sensuality of all kinds.)
3. अभ्यासः[33] (the constant effort-making, repetition of the process of retention of that Experience.)
4. क्रिया[34] the practice of the **Vedic** prescribed five-fold daily sacrifices, worship of God, study of the Vedas, ablutions to manes, charity and feeding of holy guests, to the extent possible.

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[31] तल्लब्धिविवेकः (etc,) जात्याश्रयादिनिमित्तादुष्टादन्नात् कायशुद्धिः ।

[32] कामानभिष्वङ्गः

[33] आरम्भणशीलनम् पुनः पुनरभ्यासः

[34] पञ्चमहायज्ञानुष्ठानं शक्तितः

5. कल्याणानि[35] the practice of virtues like Truth, straightforwardness, compassion, charity, non-violence, not wishing of evil for any one and so on.

6. अनवसादः[36] freedom from depression of the mind, either because of changes in time or place conditions, or due to the remembrance of a thing that produces sorrow.

7. अनुद्धर्ष[37] avoiding excessive bloating, the opposite of depression, a source of overjoy.

Question: *What about the 'eight-fold' steps' in yogic ascendency?*

Answer: Some of them can be accomodated within these steps or accessories, like **yama**, **niyama**. The rest of them come under regular yogic practices like:

(a) **Pranayama** (breath-control, even-breathing)

(b) **Asana** (the right posture of sitting proper for **upasana**. The rest of **asanas** are meant to keep the body constantly fit, clean, agile and ever-youthful and under the control of the breath and so of the mind.)

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[35] सत्यार्जवदयादानाहिंसानभिध्या

[36] देशकालवैगुण्यात् शोकवस्त्वाद्यनुस्मृतेश्च तज्जं दैन्यं
अभास्वरत्वं, मनसो अवसाद इति तद्विपर्ययो ।

[37] तद्विपर्ययो अनुद्धर्षः । अतिसंतोषश्च विरोधीत्यर्थः ।

Note that for all these qualities the Vakyakara himself provides 'Nirvachanani' - etymological explanations, as well as supportive Upanishadic texts that so prescribe these virtues.

(c) **Dhyana**	(the actual practice of meditation on one of the chosen **Vidyas**; rather its beginning.)
(d) **Pratyahara**	(the driving away of thoughts or feelings of the nature of obstacles on the way to steadfast concentration.)
(e) **Dharana**	(The actual point of focus reached and efforts to keep it on.)
(f) **Tarka**	(The effort to 'recognise' it as the one desired all along, and drive away false manifestations.)
and (g) **Samadhi**	(The yogic act of union with God as visualised in the **Vidya** so chosen.)

Yoga, genuine and fake, orthodox and heterodox

It is a pity that this **Adhyatma Yoga**, **Vaidika Yoga**, **Sanatana Yoga**, kept esoterically intact througout our **Vedic Samhitas**, has been lost to the modern world for several reasons - difficulties in access, understanding, rarity of the right candidates, eligible receptacles, discipline, non-availability of the right preceptors who are free from vanity, the itch for advertisement, and the vulgar urge to sell 'vidyas' for a consideration, the confinement of the practice only to those who are able and eligible to study the **Vedas**, discouragement from the outer society, non-protection from an extinct **kshatriya** order, and the extraordinary popularity acquired by non-vedic moulds like the **Bouddha** and **Jaina**, who advocate a mere 'mind-emptying' process as 'yoga', which catches public imagination in these days of stress and strain in our industrial, technological changes of a cataclysmic order, and of course public craze! What else can I say? What more is there to day?

The **Veda** itself is in its fallen days! Except Sri Aurobindo we do not know of anyone in recent times who has the conviction of **Vedic** yoga, and the determination to pull it out of oblivion. The Aurobindonians have formed a closed 'cult', without either discipline or determination or devotion to apply these methods to the **Vidyas!!** The case is the same with **Ramakrishna** or **Chinmaya** disciples, who do not associate **Vidyas** with **Yoga**. They seem to follow the later **Patanjali** type which can easily degenerate into the 'nihil', after the Buddhist or Jain grasp. Whom do we blame here?

Yoga by definition (**Yuj** = 'to associate, to unite') by etymology means the union of the mind (and all else) with God. "Start with the sense of '**two**' and move to a state of **unison, oneness**". That is **yoga**. This is the true sense of **Advaitic** state advocated by **Yajnavalkya, Manu, Vamadeva, Visvamitra, Vyasa, Bodhayana**.

Look at the *Br. Sutras*

(a) अविभागो वचनात् (4.2.15)

(b) अविभागेन दृष्टत्वात् (4.4.4)

There is a 'non-separability' in the final stages of movement as well as God Union. This is beyond life; but it applies to daily yogic experience too. If it can happen in aesthetic enjoyment at rapt moments of ecstacy, can it be avoided in yogic union? This is actually a 'fulfilling' moment, of the nature of fullest evolution of man, attainment of Immortality.

But no; our crowds are impatient and want quick solutions of transitory exit for permanent sorrows. So '**Yoga**' as escape, yoga of the Nihil, not requiring any steps, any discipline, or accessories. Even 'mesmerism', 'hypnosis', hallucination by drugging are being sold in the name of yoga nowadays!

In the **Vishishatdvaitic** tradition, **Yoga**-practices, which were alive till the days of **Nathamuni**, became extinct with **Tiru Kkurugai Kavalappan**, whose **Samadhi** can be seen in **Veeranararyana Puram** (Kattumannar Koil) in North Arcot district. **Appan** was the only disciple to whom Nathamuni taught it. We have also lost the manual guide left by Nathamuni called *Yoga Rahasyam*. **Yamunacharya** failed to get initiated into this yoga through **Appan** on the appointed day of his departure to the Eternal Abode, as he was at **Thiruvananthapuram** due to a regrettable forgetfulness. In recent times the late Sri Krishnamachariar of Andhra Pradesh, and Sri Ranga Priya Swamiji of Karnataka have tried to retrieve it by intense practices.

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Chapter seven

Further factors adding to the decline of Vedic Yoga

True, that **Vishisthadvaitins** have given a due and high place of honour to **Bhakti Yoga** of the **Upanishadic Upaaya** – type as the right and sure means to attain God. The followers of **Ramanuja**, particularly the adherents to the doctrines as propounded by **Vedanta Desika**, called **Vadagaleyars** (so called because of their faith in Sanskrit scriptures, the 'Northern Arts' namely Vedas, Upanishads, the Gita, the Brahma Sutra, Ramayana, Bhagavata, Bharatha, Vishnupurana and other **Smriti** texts, and a greater emphsis **on** and expertise **in** these Sanskrit works of authority), attach extraordinary importance to **Sri Bhashya** and use its teachings to test the veracity of any other teaching of earlier or later times. Unfortunately not even the **Acharyas** or **Mathadhipathis** of the Northern School either know, or teach or practice these **Yogic** methods for Release. It is all in the books, and they vehemently defend them, expound them with extraordinary care and mastery. But what they follow in practice is the alternative, of **Prapatti** or self-surrender to God, more vocally advocated in the Agamas, the Itihasas and Puranas, and exceptionally strongly in the 4000 hymns of the **Alwars**. True, it is an equally valid **Vedic** path. The difference is:

(1) While **Bhakti** or **Upasana** is for the twice born only; and even there, for the exceptional ones, **Prapatti**

is open for all, for all castes, communities, status even to the 'untouchable', the mute, blind, illiterate ones, indeed even for animals and trees. This surrender has to be performed either **through** an Acharya, or **by** the Acharya for you, on your behalf, to own you up and hand you over to God.

(2) **Bhakti** has to be performed as a mode of **Upasana**, daily, till the moment of death as the *Upanishad* and *Br. Sutras* prescribe.[38] The relevant **Upanishadic** text occurs in our very Chandogya text at 8.15.1; स खल्वेवं वर्तयन् यावदायुषं ब्रह्मलोकमभिसंपद्यते .... etc., "Such an aspirant has to practice this **yoga** througout his life, according to prescribed rules, and without violating them, till he attains the world of God." But a slip in the last moment of life, a forgetfulness, a mental stupor, some mischief of the body elements, their conspiracy, can prevent the desired result from being achieved, and send the aspirant back to **samsara,** worldly life. The **antima pratyaya** is necessary as the *Gita* emphasises it and Sastras presribe that may well be not in our hands.

(3) **Prapatti** on the other hand has an easier approach and a guarantee: It is to be performed but once - सकृत् - through an able teacher; but the **Uttarakritya**, i.e., duties that entail, have to be followed carefully,

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[38] आवृत्तिः असकृदुपदेशात् । (4.1.1) and
आप्रयाणात् तत्रापि हि दृष्टम् । (4.1.12)
"It is taught that the meditative process is to be repeated, as it is so taught in the texts."
"Even there, one must practice it till the moment of final departure. That is how Ṛsis have seen it."

tirelessly, faithfully - particularly two of them:- avoiding **Bhagavathapachara** (sinful acts, insults to the Godly) and steadfast faith to the Lord as **Vishnu** the All-merciful, omniscient Lord, in whom al else abides, with single pointed devotion. This sense of Unity of Godhead (as the all-inclusive), is the peculiarity common to **Bhakti Yoga** and **Prapatti** , and needs to be specially pointed out. While the **act** of surrender in itself consists in one moment's performance, it has a preparatory process of choosing what is in the interests of godly life, avoiding what is not in the interests of a godly life, avoiding what is not congenial to it, an unswerving faith that God will not let us down, He alone is the supreme Refuge, and a sense of total relief in the act of depositing oneself at His Feet. The post-act consists in being dutiful to God and the Godly, avoiding doubt and despair and performing all duties as mere selfless service - **Kainkarya** - without expectations.

(4) **Prapatti** is no mere physical act, however so performed by the illiterate, unenlightened and unevolved, as it has the capacity to flower up too into a **Vidya**, and **does** produce in the aspirants, due conditions, by its own potent powers, and the same Path of Light is shared by the **Prapanna** as much as by the **Bhakta** or **Upasaka**. Easier to grasp, easier to perform with doors thrown open to all, even unto the last man, this was what **Ramanuja** and after him **Desika** vociferously advocated as a preference in all their works - **Ramanuja** in his *Gadyas*, his *Gita Bhashya*, and **Desika** in all his Tamil works,

and even in his Sanskrit works like *Nikshepa Raksha*, and *Tatparya Chandrika*.

(5) The added reason for this advocacy was that though **Bhakti Yoga** was a way theoretically valid and open, its techniques had fallen on evil days, and even **Vyasa, Parashara, Shounaka, Shuka, Pundarika, Narada, Prahlada** and others practiced only **Prapatti**.

Could it be therefore that the **Vidyas** have come down to us as lights that once shone, but have now lost lustre?

Could they still be practiced for sheer pleasure, renouncing the idea of their being 'means', as 'means' have been found in **prapatti**?

The **Tengalais** tend to view them as 'fossils', 'wasteful luxuries' that have value just because of **Ramanuja**'s association with them, his advocacy of them.

Come to the scholars: None of them practices the **Vidyas**. The Monists have **Nirguna Upasana**, and the Dualists adhere to **Bhakti** as mere 'love' with **Sastraic** enlightenment, yet not in the sense of **Upasana** or **Vedana** as of 32 types.

So the present position is peculiar:. We advocate them, stand by them, swear by them, learn of them in elaborate sholarship, **but do not practice them!**

God only can explain this irony or paradox !

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Chapter eight

A brief look into the contents of Chandogya and their structure

This great and famed *Upanishad* belongs to the **Tandya** branch of **Samaveda** and runs into some 8 Chapters, with several sub-sections called **Khandas**, in each.

1. The **First Chapter** includes 13 sections, mainly instructing about **Pranava** or **Udgitha**, providing several mystic angles of vision, to realise its significance and comprehend its sweep in Sound. All that exists – the physical world, its elements, the vegetational wealth, mankind, speech, the Divine Sound – all this is but the essence of AUM in its extension or explanation. Sound and breath constitute a couple to form the Immutable Word. The **Vedic** Vidyas of **Trayi** are its expressions. (This is discussed at *Br. Sutra* III-4.21 etc.,). It contains an instructive myth (Section 2) about how the Demons tried to penetrate into the God-given faculties of hearing, speech, vision, smell, touch and so on, were able to break their unity, and introduce dualities, duplicates, and foul play, in their own favour, but could not break the integrity of the Chief Breath called **Mukhya Prana**; so **Udgitha**, the unformed **Akshara** remains safe with the instrumentality of the unbroken, uncorrupt Chief Breath. That was how **Angirasa** intuited **Udgitha**. Other teachers followed, like **Brihaspathi, Ayasya, Baka, Dalbhya**. The letters **Ut, Gi,**

Tha, are then sought to be taught in mystic comprehension. How **Udgitha** saved the gods from mortality is explained mystically in the next section. "The Sun symbolised **Udgitha** above all else." So there is an instruction about it. In the sixth section we have the **Antaraditya Vidya**, teaching about the Resplendent Purusha as God within the solar orb. It is here we have the famous कप्यास श्रुति – which describes the Eyes of the Lord as fresh, long and beautiful like the petals of a full blown lotus, just blossoming to the young yellow rays of the just rising sun. (1-6)[39]

The rest of the Sections similarly expound the **Udgitha** in highly mystical angles, visions meant for silent but rich grasp in the **Upasana** mould.

2. The **Second Chapter** has 24 sub sections. They devote themselves to different kinds of **Sama** and **Upasana**. The 'five-fold' **Sama** is looked at from a variety of mystic angles, as applied to clouds, lightning, rains, the seasons, the domesticated animals like the horse, the cow, the breath, speech, the senses, the mind. Then 'seven kinds' of **Sama** are similarly viewed and identified with daily objects of experience like food, milk, the Sun, and so on, symbolically. Then comes the 'twenty-two lettered' **Sama Vishesha** for a similar treatment. The **Hinkara** is praised mystically. The 23rd section suddenly makes a very bold and clear-to-grasp statement:

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[39] The word **Kapi** in '**Kapyasa**' is explained in six ways by ancients like **Vakyakara**, 3 to be rejected as having mean connotations and 3 only latter accepted as with dignified meanings:

(a) कं जलं पिबति = आदित्यः (He drinks, absorbs water; so is Sun) "That which blooms of him." = कप्यासं

(b) The same etymology applies to the 'stalk' on which the lotus blooms.

(c) के जलेऽप्यस्ति in कप्यासं "that which stays in the waters" = lotus.

त्रयो धर्स्कन्धाः यज्ञो, अध्ययनं, दानमिति ....

"There are three stems of Dharma, (its three legs as it were) – (a) **Sacrifices**, (b) **Study** and (d) **Charity**

Or if all these can be treated as **one** unity, the other two can be taken as **askesis** (तपः) and study in a **Gurukula**. These are the means to attain God.

3. The **Third Chapter** has 19 sub sections and starts with the propounding of **Madhu Vidya ....** "This sun is verily the honey of gods" etc., (It is not possible to sum it up briefly here.) Among the other enigmatic revelations, it states (in Section 11) that "the Sun neither rises, nor sets, he always stands at the centre, statically":

"अथ तत्र ऊर्ध्वं उदेत्य नैवोदेता
नास्तमिता, एकल एव मध्ये स्थाता ।"

Copernicans must note this! Without such scientific observation, the Sages would not have used this image for higher spiritual symbolic purposes.

This follows a brief list of spititual teachers who inherited this **Madhu vidya** by tradition – like **Brahma**, the **Prajapathis**, **Manus**, **Uddalaka**, and so on.

The 12th section extols **Gayatri** as "This All", as Speech, as it "both sings and protects" (गायति च त्रायति च). **Gayatri** has 'four feet' and is of 'six kinds'. It is identified as the '**Hridaya**' and '**Akasha**' in man, and looked at from various angles.

The 14th section is devoted to **Shandilya Vidya**, which states that 'all this, indeed, in this life, is God, as it is all born in Him, is sustained in Him and breathes in Him.[40] It also

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40. सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म, तज्जलानिति शान्त उपासीत ।

states that the **Upasaka** attains **Brahman** in the other world, endowed with the same characteristics as he visualises Him in meditation[41] The teaching means that God ensouls this all.

The 15th section describes a four fold 'fruits' emerging out of this **Upasana**.

(1) long life for one's son,
(2) wealth inexhaustible,
(3) breath,
(4) attainment of worlds.

The 16th section explains these further, in what is known as **Purusha Vidya**: the life of man consists of an initial 24 years, a middle 44 years, and the last 48 years. (24+44+48=116 total number of years.) This is the minimum. (but it can go up). The **first part** of 24 years corresponds to the syllables of **Gayatri**, and constitutes the 'morning offerings' (**Pratassavana**) of the sacrifice, governed by **Vasu Devatas**, they being the 'breath' as they alone make the body inhabitable. They indeed protect him. The **second part** of 44 years corresponds to the **Trishtup**, and constitutes the noon-offerings' (**madhyandina savana**) of this sacrifice, as governed by **Rudras**, again as 'breath'. They indeed have the power to make one 'weep' (**Rud**) and are so called functionally. The last part of 48 years corresponds to the syllables of **Jagati**[42] and constitutes the evening-offerings (**sayam savana**) of this sacrifice, now governed by **Adityas**, again as breath. The '**Vasus**' make a body inhabitable, (**vasayanti**), as breath. The '**Rudras**' protect it from sorrow or weeping (**rodayanti**), and the '**Adityas**', as they 'receive' (**aadadate**) all that, can keep the body together and move on towards immortality. In all, it relates to **Pranayama** or breath control, throughout.

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[41] अथ खलु क्रतुमयः पुरुषः । यथाक्रतुरस्मिन् लोके पुरुषो भवति, तथेत प्रेत्य भवति । etc.,

[42] *Note*: **Gayatri** is 8 syllabled. Multiply by 3 stages = 24
Triṣktu̱bh is 11 syllables. Multiply by 4 = 44
Jagati has 12 syllables. Multiply by 4 = 48
Yrs 116

8 **vasus**, 11 **rudras**, 12 **adityas** govern our life, summing up 33 **devas**, as usual.

The **Phalasruti** extols that **Mahidasa Aitareya** prescribed it for a full, fulfilled life. It also says that:

(1) Ghora Angirasa taught it to Devaki Putra Sri Krishna, (in **Shankara**'s understanding).

(2) Ghora Angirasa taught it to his disciples by dedicating it first to **Sri Krishna**, (in **Ramanuja's** understanding).

In the last moments, a practitioner of this **Vidya** should utter these '**formulae**':

(a) अक्षितमसि,

(b) अच्युतमसि,

(c) प्राणसंशितमसि,

which mean an inward teaching, inward, confidential, comforting last words to the effect

(a) "you are immortal, immutable, beyond death"

(b) "you are beyond loss of identity, or essential nature"

and (c) "God! you are subtle and are the breath-giver to all living things, and (so I have achieved you.)"

The 17th section prescribes that for one who practices this **Purusha vidya,** all his activities like eating, drinking, rest, vows, sports, smiles etc., constitute as but accessories.

The 18th section teaches that '**mind is God**', in symbolic mystic details.

The 19th section teaches that '**the sun is God**'. He indeed brought out order out of chaos, and so on.

Chapter 4 teaches the **Samvarga vidya**, by citing an anecdote: (in 3 sections)

There was once a king called **Janashruti Pautrayana** known for charity, food and shelter to guests and the needy. He became proud of his good works. Two sages, guised as swans once flew over his palace, one of them praising this king as of heaven-reaching fame, and the other denying it and attributing that height of fame to a **Brahmavadin** by name **Raikva**, totally unknown to the king or other fame-seeking good-doers. The other bird too wondered as to who **Raikva** was. This was overheard by **Janashruti** himself. He got up from bed, called his minister, and ordered a search for that unknown **Raikva**. The search for that **Brahmavid** was a failure as nobody knew him anywhere in his territory as an identity worth knowledge. Search in Brahmin colonies continued, in lonely secluded spots, in penance groves, river-sides, hill-sides and holy spots, until **Raikva** was spotted as lying, free of care under a cart, for sun-shelter, scratching his legs because of some itch! That was in a garden adjacent to a human dwelling. After verifying his identity personally, the minister went back to the king to report his discovery. The king now approached **Raikva** with huge presents, 6000 cows, costly necklaces, lovely horses to draw chariots etc., and said unto him: "Sir, have these little presents and instruct me about the Deity whom you worship or meditate upon."

Raikva replied: "Let these be your own as I do not need them" and addressed him a "**Shudra**".[43]

The king mistook the message and felt that his gifts were refused as they were too small, a trifle, and went on approaching **Raikva** again and again periodically with the gifts increasing more profusely and more costly. But the refusal continued with the same message of 'rebuff' – '**shudra**'. Then the king one day understood the message and approached the teacher "full of sorrow that he had not acquired **Brahma vidya**" and in full "Shudrahood."[44]

Now began the teaching: There are these elements – Wind, Fire, Water, which roll up all this created world into a final unity, in the process of Dissolution. Similarly breath rolls up man's physical personality in a final consolidation. That which so "rolls up" is **Samvarga**. **Agni**, **Surya**, **Chandra** are rolled up into primeval waters. **It is God who so rolls up all into Himself** in these manifestations. Meditate on Him. There is an '**adhidevata**' and an '**adhyatma**' to be known in between – breath absorbs all senses, both physically and spiritually.

Raikva adds a further anecdote: there were two young novices, a **Kapeya** (of **Kapi Gotra**), and a **Shaunaka** (of **Angirasa Gotra**) serving a teacher by name **Kaksha Sena** known as **Abhipratarin**. One day the disciples denied food as alms to his teacher in sheer indifference, and irreverance for the **Samvarga Upasana**, and awaited what the teacher would say unto them as reaction.[45]

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[43] The word does not mean 'a servant', a man of the 4th social order after a **Bhrahmin**, a **Kshatriaya**, a **Vaishya**, but 'one who is worried or one who grieves" (that he is unblessed with **Brahma Vidya**).

[44] The *Upanishad* identifies the village as in **Kashmir** and as associated with **Raikva** in "**Raikvaparna**"

[45] The story reoccurs in *Jaiminiya Upanishad Brahmana, with more details.*

The teacher now pronounced: there are four great **mahatmas**: **agni**, **aditya**, **chandra** and **jala**; but God who controlls them and rolls them into a Unity with Himself as **One**, He is always awake, as protector of the worlds. Fools, mortals do not see Him. though He lives in all this, in manifold manifestations,. It is to Him, you two have denied food, His own food denied to Himself!

Now **Kapeya** understood:[46] :

"He is the Soul of gods; he is the progenitor of creatures. He is goldenjawed. He devours all (demons). He is the all-knower. The wise say of his glory – that He verily destroys or rolls up what so deserves, without personal appetite or the need for physical food."

The **Fourth section** begins the **Jabala Satya Kama Vidya**: (and runs into 5 sections).

Satyakama, son of mother **Jabala** did not know his father, as his mother in her youth served many **rishis** as servant. Yet he was initiated by **Gautama**, as belonging to a **Gotra** of his mother's own name, for his truthfulness, as only a **Brahmin** could speak such truth, however unpleasant. The teacher, then gave him some four hundred famished cows to be tended with care in the **Ashram**, and said: "Do not return until you grow or rear them into a thousand."

During such service a **Bull** taught him a **Brahma Vidya**, of **Brahman** in 4 aspects.[47]. Further **Agni**, a **Swan**, and a bird called **Madgu** taught him the other aspects or quarters.

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[46] आत्मा देवानां जनिता प्रजानां हिरण्यदंष्ट्रो बभसोऽनसूरिः ।
महान्तमस्य महिमानमाहुः अनद्यमानो यदन्नमत्ति ।।

[47] known as चतुष्कल ब्रह्मन् with each direction as a Foot

Then the boy returned to his teacher, who came to know of the boy's acquirement of Divine Knowledge – of Brahman in 16 aspects.[48]

The **Tenth Section** starts the **Upakosala Vidya**. This **Upakosala Kamalayana** was a disciple of **Satyakama** who stayed with his teacher for twelve years, and yet was not instructed, while all other disciples left after full instruction! The Acharya's wife persuaded her husband to have pity on the boy. Even then he never taught him, but sent him to a distant place. The boy was now afflicted with sorrow and disease, and was unable even to eat; the boy said: "Madame, I am full with diseases. Life itself consists of many of these, like birth, oldage, death, disease, mental afflictions and other physical disabilities. There is also fear and want. What can I so eat?"

Then the Holy Fires in the **Ashram** took pity on the boy and taught him what he wanted – **Brahma Vidya**: "Breath is **Brahman**, waters are **Brahman**, and the sky is **Brahman**.[49]

The boy said, "The first is what I know; what I can understand; but not these other two."

The **Fires** then elaborated a mystical explanation in detail to conclude that: "the Person in the Sun is verily the Indweller in the man too; so also the one in the Moon, the Breath, the Skies, the higher space, the flash in the electric sparks, the lightning. He is in you."

For the confirmation and further elaboration, he was sent back to the teacher.[50]

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[48] known as षोडशकल ब्रह्मन्

[49] प्राणो ब्रह्म, कं ब्रह्म, खं ब्रह्म ...

[50] आचार्यस्तु ते गतिं वक्ता ...

The Acharya taught him then: "What you see in the Eye is verily **Atma**, God; He is immortal, Fearless. Even if the relatives of such **Brahamavid, do** or **do not** perform the last rites, when he dies, he does ascend on to the abode of **Bramhan** through the path of light.[51]

Sections 16 and 17 teach a mystical **Yajna** and its significance, involving the mind, speech and so on, to extol **Swadhyaya**, Vedic studies.

Chapter 5 teaches **Prana Vidya** (in 2 sections). The third section teaches the **Panchagni Vidya** (in 10 sections in detail).

Shvetaketu son of **Uddalaka** once went to the court of a **Panchala** prince by the name **Pravahana Jaivali** to obtain gifts amidst winners in a **Brahma Vidya** debate and discussion.

But the king put him 5 important questions none of which the young man could answer:

(1) Do you know from where people come here to this world?

(2) Where do they go after death?

(3) What is the difference between **Devayana** and **Pitriyana**?

(4) Why does not the world get saturated with people?

(5) Do you know how in the 5th oblation, 'Water' begins to speak with human voice?

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51. This assurance is what many do not perhaps know! The **Archiradi-marga gamana** is assured to a **Brahman** – knower, irrespective of the rituals that follow death, as **Puranas** also confirm. This does not mean that the relatives have no duty. The **Kathaka Sruti** says: न कर्मणा लिप्यते पापकेन ....

The young man went to his father with a downcast face and reported. The two – father and son, - then approached the king for instruction. The king put them on probation and finally taught the **Vidya**.

The Jiva is filtered through Five Fires:-

1.	Heavens	(स्वर्ग)
2.	Rain	(पर्जन्य)
3.	Earth	(पृथिवी)
4.	Man	(पुरुष)
5.	Wife (woman)	(योषा)

Soma, **Vayu**, **Samvatsara**, **Vak** and the **origin** act as instruments. The gods rain down a man on to this earth when his good deeds have borne fruit and get exhausted; so the **jiva** comes down and takes shelter in the seeds of corn, gets consumed by man, enters his vitality, passes through a woman's womb, and then in this 5th 'oblation' **'waters'** as 'vitality',. acquire a human form, and are so endowed with the faculty of speech.

Some departed souls, through **Vidya Upasana** reach the Eternal Abode, and do not return.

Among those that return, some with "balance of fruits of good deeds"[52] attain worthy stations, stages for making further efforts for Release.

Those with "balance of fruits of evil deeds"[53] acquire bodies of reptiles, wild animals, dogs, pigs, man-killers, robbers, thieves and so on.[54]

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52. रमणीय चरणाः

53. कपूय चरणाः

54. श्वयोनिं वा सूकरयोनिं वा चण्डालयोनिं ....

The five questions are hereby answered.

Section 15 of this Chapter 5, teaches the **Vaishvanara Vidya**: (and runs into 9 sections, to the end.)

1. **Prachinashala Aupmanyava**,
2. **Satyayajna Paulushi**,
3. **Indradyumna Bhallaveya**,
4. **Jana Sharkarakshaya**, and
5. **Budila Aswatarashvi**

– these five celebrated aspirants of **Brahma Vidya** once approach **Uddalaka**, for the instruction about **Atma** the Indweller; the teacher examines them, keeps them under watch and finally instructs: (Section 18 onwards.)

"He is **Vaishvanara** ("one who leads all"). His head is of light; His eyes on all sides; (He sees like the Sun.) His breath is the all pervasive winds and air. (- all this is to be realised in the very personality of the meditator, symbolically.) The earth is His Feet. Chest is the sacrificial altar; hair on it the **darbha** grass; heart, mind and mouth corresponding to the three fires of (a) **Garhapathya**, (b) **Ahavaniya** and (c) **Anvaharyapachana** " and so on.

This, the **Upasaka** must realise in himself.

◆

Chapter eight

Sad Vidya

This chapter (No. 6) running into some 16 sections is entirely concerned with the **Sad Vidya**, expounding one of the most pregnant and enigmatic statements of the **Upanishadic** lore – **Tat Twam Asi**.

There is a story-setting as below:

Svetaketu, son of **Uddalaka**, did not show any inclination to learn **Brahmavidya**, for a long time in his younger days. The worried father sent him to a **gurukula** with regrets. He stayed there for some twelve years and returned, back with the false pride that he had mastered all that there was to learn, yet without an iota of **Brahman**-knowledge. The father, to check up, asked him:

"Have you heard about that Supreme Director (आदेश)[55]

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[55] '**Adesha**' is usually taken as 'instruction', 'direction', either, as the 'object' of a teaching, as **Shankara** takes. In **Ramanuja**'s view it refers to an **adeshta**, and so followed by **Vatsya Varada**, **Srutaprakashikacharya**, **Desika** and others. It refers to God. आदिश्यते अनेन इति, as कता. The context is beyond the scope of a mere 'instruction' as it involves Causation, जगत्कारणसंदभ , with material and instrumental causes merging into **One** as जगदेककारण .

knowing whom, one will have known all that there is to know, heard all that there is to hear of, grasped all that there is to grasp?"

The son crashes and breaks down crestfallen! He prays for that **Vidya** to be taught to him, as he does not wish to spend a second duration of pupilship elsewhere, and wonders whether there can be such a 'thing' by knowing which all can be known!

The teaching is about '**Prashasita**'- a 'Supreme Ruler' who upholds all as **Dharaka**. The 'hearing', 'grasping', 'knowing', all mean an **Upasana**.

The father says: "Look here: just as by knowing the nature of clay, you can know about all that is made of clay, or by knowing about a metal lump you can know all forms of jewels made of it, or even just as you know a nail-cutter you know all about iron as its cause, similarly by knowing the All - cause, all effects are known. Cause and effect are but **One** in two different conditions. Effects are different in Names as of different forms, but the cause is alone real as **One**, though effects are real as **many**."

The cause inheres in the effect, to give continuity of Reality.

◆

Chapter nine

Some Explanations

God is **One** we may say; but the world is **many**; how do the **many** come out of the **one**? Is the **One** lost? Or the many produced out of Nothing? What exactly is Causation? Or as the **Sankhya** says, do the effects come out of a mischievous **Prakriti**, and God an unaccountable, helpless witness to this undesirable act? Is the cause real while effects are not, as Monists say? Or are 'cause' and 'effect' totally disconnected in relation, as **Naiyayyikas** say or **Dwaitins** maintain? Which is a better state for **Brahman**? (if you **do** acept **causation** from 'one to many'), to remain a mere cause as सत्? or become many? as possessing distinct names and forms?

The two most crucial terms subject to lots of misunderstanding are सत् and असत्.

To my best understanding there has not come a better analysis than the one offered by Dr. J.A.B. Van Buitenin[56] to solve the tangles made here by earlier interpretations. The terms are used in other *Upanishads*, themselves, in opposite senses. Even in the present *Upanishad* itself ! Monists and **Sankhyans** have made a mess of it, irespective of contexts in which they occur. Further, English translations, since the time of Max Muller, Vivekananda, Deusson, Schopenhauer and others, have tended to orient these terms into sterotypes, of pessimism, contempt of the world, and the causational process itself. So where do we go? Where do we start?

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[56] **Sri Ramanuja's** *Vedartha Sangraha*: Ed. Translated and annotated with an elaborate introduction; Pub: **Deccan Institute, Pune.**

Let us first be clear on some notable usages.

(1) The **Sankhyan** sense of '**Asat**'
= **Prakriti**, inert matter, which is always in meaningless change or flux, with no self-identity. (This is nowhere in the *Upanishads*. But they were trying to misappropriate **Upanishdic** texts as supportive of their usage, and that is the beginning of confusion.)

(2) The **Monistic** or Advaitic sense of '**Asat**'
= a meaningless, changing entity, the mirage of the world, **Sat** under a cloud of **maya**, a deformity – विकार – which is not even its own explanation, much less of causation.

(3) The *Tait.* text usage usage of '**Asat**'
= The world-order yet to emerge[57] out of a Divine Chaos of the **Nasadiya**, where the world remained undifferentiated into Names and Forms.

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[57] as for instance in the *Taittiriya Upanishad, Ananda Valli* असद्वा इदमग्र आसीत ...... *Tait Brahmana* and *Tait Samhita,* maintain: असतः सदजायत. This can provide glimpses of a carpenter making furniture out of woods of trees in forests. (In the *Visvakarma Sukta*)

(4) The **advaitic** or **monistic** sense of **Sat**
= a changeless Reality, which they translate as 'Existence', 'that which always 'IS' as beyond the deformities of Time and Place.

(5) The **Samkhyans** mean by **Sat**
= **Purusha**, Jiva beyond change (corresponding to the later Monisit Absolute.)

[But strangely they maintain a real, actual evolution, in what is known as सत्कार्यवाद. Prakriti may be mute, inert, but it does undergo a change, without affecting the **Purusha**. So they land in (a) an entirely fluid world of material change, and (b) an entirely immune Purusha, totally beyond mutation, thus failing to explain life as a homogeneous flow of evolution. The senses of सत् and असत् have become totally mixed up, and this habit of mind, using such terms carelessly has plagued **Vedanta** well beyond the scope and periods of **Shankara** and **Ramanuja** as you see in English translations of Sanskrit explanations. We shall discuss the **Madhva** position later on.]

(6) In the **Vishishtadvaitic** sense
(a) **Sat** = means **God** in the causal state potential, कारणावस्था with the world elements like **Jiva** and **Prakriti** in Him, ready for the launch of the creational process. When the *Ch. Upanishad* says –

सदेव सोम्य इदमतत्र आसीत्
एकमेवाद्वितीयम् –

this is the meaning: "God was alone, the sole cause of the world-process, with 'Urge' or 'Sankalpa', full with the world in Him in a latent stage. It is He as an Intelligent Principle – चैतन्य – so willed it ऐक्षत, (इक्षतेर्नाशब्दम् of *Br. Sutra* refers to it.) He was अद्वितीयम् as the sole agent of causation. Plurality was in Him, not outside Him.

(b) **Asat** = means the 'materials', the mix up of souls and matter in the personality of God as Hiranya Garbha, just before creation, as an out-of-order mix up. That is also the *Tait* sense, of *Samhita, Brahmana* and *Upanishad*. Please also remember *Br. Up.* of **Yajnavalkya**'s Divine Prayer:

असतो मा सद्गमय,
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय
मृत्योर्मा अमृतं गमय

confirming the same **Vishistadvaitic** grasp. Look at these three statements, identifying असत् = तमस् = मृत्यु = the state of as-yet-uncreated world of disorder in the state of **Pralaya**.

(a) तम आसीत् तमसा गूढमग्रे प्रकेतम् ....
(b) तुच्छेनाभ्वपिहितम् ....
(c) ततो रात्रिरजायत ....
(d) आनीदवातगँ् स्वधया तदेकम् ....

The total sense of all these texts is **identical** – a direction of the world moving from Chaos into Order, from Implicitness into Manifestation, from Darkness into Light, from Death into Immortality, making evolution possible, meaningful, purposeful, with uniform standardised meanings. This avoids the **Samkhyan** confusions, and those arising from a concept of Static Reality of **Advaita**, with inevitable conclusions of world-unreality, life's meaninglessness, pessimism etc.

So the primary **cause** or Agent of Creation is **God** as सत्. In the post-creational scenario, God is Immanent, Indweller in the world as अन्तर्यामी and with Him in it, the world also is सत्. When, therefore, later on, this same **Sadvidya** comes out with the coordinate proposition **Tat Tvam Asi,** you have these further consequential meanings here:

(i) **Tat** = refers to God as in कारणावस्था, as potential state, casual state, with the world in Him.

(ii) **Tvam** = refers to God as in कार्यावस्था, as consequential state, the created state, the effect-state, with Him inside that world.[58]

(iii) The equation is between **God** in two different states and so is **Valid**:[59]

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[58] तदेवं नामरूपविभागनर्ह सक्ष्मदशापन्नप्रकृतिपुरुषशरीरं व्रह्म कारणावस्थम् ।
जगतः तदापत्तिरेव प्रलयः ।
नामरूप विभक्तस्थूलचिदचिद्वस्तुशरीरं व्रह्म कार्यावस्थम् ।
व्रह्मणः तथाविधस्थूलभाव एव सृष्टिरित्युच्यते ।।(from *Vedartha Sangraha*)

[59] सामानाधिकरण्यं हि द्वयोः पदयोः प्रकारद्वयमुखेन एकार्थनिष्ठत्वं ।
तदित्यनेन जगत्कारणं सर्वकल्याणगुणाकरं निरवद्यं व्रह्मोच्यते ।
त्वमिति च [illegible]सामानाधिकरणवृत्तेन जीवान्तर्यामिरूपी, तच्छरीरं
[illegible] यतं तत्प्रकारं व्रह्मोच्यते ।। (from *Vedartha Sangraha*)

Example: You say – **That** is **this** Devadutta, or
This is **that** Devadutta.

(i) Here you are now seeing an old man, minus teeth, bald-headed, holding a staff for support, decrepit, weak of eyesight, fumbling for words, as an ascetic.

(ii) You have seen him some sixty years back, as an able-bodied young man, full of hair, straight, energetic, with handsome gaze, goodlooks, and clear in sight, and a young man in studies.

Now you exclaim: **"That** is **this** man!"

The equation explains surprise, fulfilment, recognition, and happiness at the discovery of Identity persisting in all this change over all these decades. There is **flux**, but also **Identity**. Both are meaningful. Nothing is lost.

The fate of the equation in **Advaita** is reduced to a tautology, and in **Advaita**, further, change is discounted, reducing the world into '**maya**', purposeless, and **Isvara-Karunya** vehemently expressed in terms like "हन्त!"[60] reduced into nothing, nullified and so on. In **Dvaita** the **Samanadhikaranya** (equation) is totally rejected, mistaking **Tvam** for **Shvetaketu**, a soul, possessed of 'arrogance', 'ignorance', and a mere 'creature' not worthy of equation with **Tat** as God. The **Tat Tvam Asi** is ever sought to be totally negated, drawing the negative prefix 'अ' (from the **Savarnadirgha** compound, from the immediately previous word like स

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60. In this same *Upanishad* at 6.3.2 हन्ताऽहमिमास्तिस्रो देवता अनेन जीवनेनानुप्रविश्य नामरूपेव्याकरवाणि. ("Alas! Let me enter into these three, Dieties - Fire, Water, Food - and along with the Jivatman, and let me bestow names and form on these creatures."

आत्मातत् त्वमसि .(Meaning: "He is your Soul, you are not That".) Or else तत् त्वमसि is run into all **vibhaktis** in the तत्पुरुष compound manner – तेन त्वमसि, तस्मात् त्वमसि, तस्य त्वमसि, तस्मिन् त्वमसि and so on: "You are **because** of Him, **in** Him, **for** Him, **of** Him", vindicating differences only, rather than the identity between the states of God - the casual and the effectual. God does not admit of 'change' in this system; and though creation is vociferously declared as 'real', its purpose is knocked off by negating the meaning of the **Sutra:**[61] by using it as a **siddhanta sutra** rather than *Prima Facie* view as **Ramanuja** takes. **Shankara**'s **advaitic** position vis-a-vis, **leela** and **maya**, and the view that **Brahman** becomes the **Jiva** by a self-imposed **Adhyasa**, is equally fallacious and leads to the same pessimistic conclusion of world process's meaninglessness or purposelessness.

See this criticism:[62] (In this same context of
Sad Vidya and **Tat Tvam Asi**)

"Further, what is the use of **maya** for **Brahman**, if that **maya** is itself unreal in the last count? If you say, its use is to impose ignorance on the Jivatman, we ask, what use is this imposition of ignorance, as it is also unreal? You will say that it is mere play! We ask, then, further, what use is such play for one who is of the nature of endless bliss? You will say that such play is a purpose of achievement for only one who is fulfilled in all pleasures and bliss. That will not make sense! Because, enjoyment of unreal play as bliss does not emerge out of mere mirages with unreal sports-material, and unreal instruments of unreal sports, except to one who is really mad or out of senses!"

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[61] *Br. Sutra* 2.1.32

[62] किं च अपस्मार्थभूतया नित्यया मायया किं प्रयोजनं ब्रह्मणः ? जीवमोहनमिति चेत्, अपुरुषार्थेन मोहनेन किं प्रयोजनम् ? क्रीडेति चेत् अपरिच्छिन्नानन्दस्य किं कीडया? परिपूर्णभोगानामेव क्रीडा पुरुषार्थेन लोके दृष्टेति चेत्, नैवमिहोपपद्यते । न ह्यपरमार्थभूतैः क्रीडोपकरणैः अपरमार्थतयाप्रतिभासमानैर्निष्पन्नयाऽपरमार्थभूतया क्रीडयाऽपरमार्थभूतेन च तत्प्रतिभासेनानुन्मत्तानां क्रीडारसो निष्पद्यते ।
(*Sri Bhashyam*, 2-1-15)

So to miss the balance of the coordinate proposition **Tat Tvam Asi** is to miss the whole purpose of **Sad Vidya** as a **prakarana**, as a context, as a valuable teaching, This is important, as otherwise we will be at loggerheads, against the teachings in all other *Upanishads* also and land very near **Buddhism**.

The **Sad Vidya**, in other words, has two valuable, indispensable implications, concepts, thus.

1. World's Reality,
2. The philosophy of mutual or inseparable, inaleinable, reciprocal relationship between God and His creature, this world of matter and souls.

(1) It is only **Sat** (as the world with God's Immanence) that emerges out of **Sat** (as the world potent with God inside Him). Otherwise the equation is meaningless. But there is a world **process** in between, which is real, as real as God. The purpose of creation is Jiva's evolution out of primordial ignorance into its Fulness, or Immortality as all *Upanishads* declare. The Jiva is not ready-made. But he is not beyond deformation due to **Karma**. It is no actualisation from nowhere. That would again be **maya**. He is evolving from a mere 'promise' (सूक्ष्म) into 'concretion' (स्थूल), with maxmimalisation of ज्ञान in the **Dharma Bhuta** aspect, by receiving Divinity, Grace, Omniscence without altering in the status of the other polar aspect of ज्ञान called **'svarupa'**, i.e., of self-identity. He never forgets himself, never questions his identity. What happens is a full enrichment of all other varieties of ज्ञान as experienced, including God-experience.

(2) At any point of time, in all infinity, (if such can be named or identified for arguent's sake), God and the world of matter and the souls can never be separated in the concept of चिदचिद्विशिष्ट [63] Either it is expressed, acualised, or latent, unmanifest, like the relationship between a seed and its tree. This is the meaning of the text "पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदम् पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते। पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ।"[64]

Our *Chandogya* text adduces some **nine** valuable analogies to prove this relatioship[65] ending each time with the refrain "All this is ensouled by Him, He is in you too."[66]

(1) There is a bird tied to a post with a length of cord. It moves round, hops, and returns to the point of bond for final rest. (Movement in 'states' are controlled by the Lord, as the agent of bondage and freedom.)

(2) Take a honey-hive, beehive; Many kinds of honey are gathered there, and exist together in a harmony of sweetness, non-separatedly, without reservations of narrow origins. So also all things live in God.

(3) See how all rivers ultimately join the sea, and attain fulness there, without borders or boundaries or tainted limitations. So also creatures move into God.

(4) Take an axe and go on cutting branches, twigs and even the stem. You see some damage no doubt; but the tree does not die but sprouts again. But if the root is cut up, broken, dug up, then the tree dies. So

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63. See my book: *Basic concepts of Visishtadvaita*. Ch. 2.3 for greater details, analysis, contrasts and exegesis.
64. **Shanti Patha** of *Isha* and *Shukla Yajur Veda*.
65. See my book *Sri Ramanuja* on **Tat Tvam Asi** and **Neti Neti** for greater details and comparisons.
66. ऐतदात्म्यमिदं सर्व । तत् सत्यं । स आत्मा । तत्वमसि श्वेतकेतो । ।

like the tree which guarantees life to all parts through firm root, so is God in you, the guarantor.

(5) Take the seed of a banyan tree and break it into atoms, molecules and powder it. Take each of these and go on powdering it; what do you see at last? Nothing, by the visualising eye, and yet there is a potence, indestructible. That is how God pervades all that there is, as its potency, strength, base.

(6) Take a pinch of salt. You see it, do you not? Yes. But now put it into a cup of water. What do you see? It is 'lost', has vanished out of sight! Yet when you sip, you experience its presence. That is how He resides everywhere invisibly.

(7) Let us imagine that a man is kidnapped by robbers in **Gandhara**. They blindfold him, after robbing him and leave him in a dense forest. He cries for help and succour. Now others guide him, until, if he is daring and intelligent, he reaches his home, his destiny by persisitent enquiry and guidance. So also a pupil guided by a preceptor reaches God.

(8) Let us take a man on the death bed. His relatives gather round him and go on asking: "Do you see me? do you recognise me?" He does, until speech merges into mind, mind into **Prana**, **Prana** into **Tejas**, and **Tejas** into **God**. Not after that! So also all these faculties in man are rooted in Him only.

(9) Let us take a thief, caught red-handed. He is tried with a read-hot axe.[67] If it burns, then he is executed;

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[67] In ancient times, such was the test; an accused had to hold red-hot iron in hand and swear innocence to prove which. that hot iron would not burn him! If burnt. his guilt was proved!

if not he is freed. What causes freedom from guilt and so does not burn his bands, is **Truth** that pervades him as well as that red-hot piece of iron. So also God pervades all.

The inference from the analogies supports neithr **Dvaita** not **advaita**, as they suggest neither non-relational rigid finites nor absolutistic Beyond-Relational notions. See them for yourselves.

(a) the bird and the 'post' relation is one of God as आधार = **support**, and Jiva as आधेय or the **supported**.

(b) the bee-hive and collected-honey-relation suggests that after **karma kshaya**, the Jivas attain Him as Finaly Harmony and Peace, as गम्य , the goal of reach.

(c) The river and the sea analogy suggests अंश, अंशी relation or प्रकार प्रकारी relation.

(d) God as the supreme 'root' of creation, with all else as creature is the meaning of this Tree and root analogy.

(e) The banyan-seed analogy suggests God's invisible presence in all as the potence of creation.

(f) Salt and water suggests All-pervasion.

(g) God is the goal of all human search with the help of a right teacher.

(h) God as truth, God as प्रशासिता, the Supreme ruler, law keeper, is the suggestion here.

Only in this mode of understanding you get justice for **Sad Vidya**, its coordinate proposition **Tat Tvam Asi** and the idea of God's causation, the world's reality, its 'oneness' with God as Effect, and the *Br. Sutra* [68] which so understands all this.

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[68] तदनन्यत्वं आरंभणादि शब्देभ्यः । (2.1.15)

In this way **Chapter 6** of this *Upanishad* is its essence, as the **Sad Vidya** is central not only to its teaching but also to all the *Upanishads*, and the entire **Vedanta** system, however so one may understand it. Mere logical, grammatical 'correctness' or 'justifiability' of these Statements takes you neither here nor there, unless you are honest, free of 'school affiliations', narrow loyalties, and follow textual implications with **yogic** guidance, verified in actual higher mystical experience.

Chapter 7

This Chapter teaches **Bhooma vidya**, already referred to earlier in the context of instruction from **Sanat Kumara** to **Narada**. The final teaching is summed up as **God-Union (Yoganubhuti)** where: "one does not see any other, hear any other, know no other, That is the Ultimate, the highest to attain the Vast, the Infinite.[69] That is **Bhuma**."

Chapter 8

This Chapter teaches the **Dahara Vidya**, as of God as the most subtle all-Pervader, in the innermost labyrinth of our hearts. He is free of hunger, thirst, death, sorrow, sin, age, and any other infirmities, limitations and is endowed with **Unfailing Will** to achieve all He wants. The Chapter also describes **Moksh phala, moksh sukha**, the experience of final release, its nature of bliss, and the nature of attainment, for the first time, in whatever mystical terms, we are allowed to have! It defines God as broken into 3 syllables सत् + ति + यम्

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[69] यत्र नान्यत् पश्यति, नान्यत् श्रुणोति, नान्यत् विजानाति, स भूमा ।
Bhuma literally means 'The Big', the contrast of 'alpa' the small. It is not quantitative, nor has spatio-temporal dimensions and so is Highest, the most Exalted, the All, the Final, the Omniscient, All Embracing, All Compassionate Brahman, than whom nothing higher is desirable as Achievement.

(meaning the **Immortal** + the **mortal** + and the **means by which the mortal attains the Immortal**.) Note again the implications of Relations, World-reality, reality of the process of attainment. God is the 'Bridge',[70] it states; He is that which upholds all this multiplicity without allowing a mix-up, or **swarupa nasha** of things, their loss of identities. It also describes God's final world, beyond Time and Space, vividly with its trees, groves, cool groves, that abode is अपराजिता – inaccessible to enemies of Truth, to sinners –[71] a citadel of God. Then it describes the **yogic** path, passage through **Brahma Nadi**.and how the **yogi** is guided to that world at every step of progress by His Servants.[72] Finally this section instructs about the value of such teaching, as through an anecdote. **Virochana**, the demon king and **Indra**, leader of gods, both obtained the same instruction. While **Virochana** missed the truth by doubt, mistrust, malice and meanness, and landed in materialism, **Indra** caught the truth by a second instruction confirming his right grasp. "The person in the Eye" taught here, is neither the Ego, nor the physical personality of material being, but God, the inspirer, the Divine Doer, the Indweller, the Pure Spirit! So? It is easy to teach, in a way! But difficult to grasp, retain, follow and achieve. The 15 sections of this Chapter read like one continuous Essay or Discourse in a breath-taking, breath-holding, mind-boggling, doubt-gobbling series of Revelations.

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[70] This assurance is unparallelled.

[71] The same as the meaning of 'Ayodhya' also denoted by the same term, in the **Ayodhya**-sukta in the *Tait. Aranyaka*.

[72] St. **Nammalvar** describes the same in the last verses of his *Tiruvaymozi*.

Chapter ten

Conclusion

Philosophical whirlwinds and indeed tornados do not subside on their own, or softly. They not merely wreck order, the finest monuments of man, of civilization and culture, but also threaten rebuilt structures with fatal periodicity and repeat 'adventures' of havocs.

Buddhism, Sankhyan Dualism, shades of Materialism, denials of all kinds, – God, Values, the individual Self, its evolution and so on have done ravages in our country for the past two thousand years at least. If you take **Devasura** struggles, metaphysically, the conflict is as old as Creation.

Even when savants with good intentions on the **Hindu** horizon arise, to restore **Vedantic** wisdom in its pristine – pure balance, to unravel its heart, essential nature of things, these remnants of die-hard habits of irrelevant thinking have clung on to them unfortunately. Strict esotericism was practiced in the **Gurukulas** of yore for this reason – that teachings shall not be distorted, disfigured, misoriented and mis-appropriated.

True; texts have come intact. But oral traditions of interpretations have been tampered with, wittingly or unwittingly. Muslim mauraudors had no use for our traditions or the need to distort. They wanted to grab the land and our people; they converted, looted, conquered through swords and gun-barrels. The Christians introduced falsities through wrong translations, insinuations of 'Hindu-inferiority" before "Christian exclusive Revelations" and distorted versions began to appear in "the Sacred Books of the East," and "Harvard Oriental Services". An abused confused philosophical Intelligentsia of Hindus fell to the trap and our oriental institutes imitated false schoarship-role models.

These misinterpretations were sought to be repudiated by **Swamy Dayananda** and **Sri Aurobindo** to some extent. **Sri Ramakrishna**'s equation of all "religions" in one equation added most to this confoundment, that was unfortunate. **Swamy Vivekanda**, for all his patriotism, realism, nationalism, clung to schools of "world-denial" and pessimism, and had no time for revision, and was overtired, overweighed by too many oppressive national, spiritual problems.

So our mess still require to be cleared! And where do we start?

In our present series, as declared earlier, we start with **Veda Vyasa**, and pass through **Bodhayana, Tanka, Dramida** and others through **Ramanuja** and **Aurobindo** – a tradition not much exposed to the willing, hungry, curious, spiritual public. We call it: "the other approach" – the one of reconciliation, inclusion, synthesis, enlargement, of acceptance of all that is valuable in the entire span of Hindu thought – **Veda, Agama, smriti, itihasa, purana, Ayurveda, Nritya, Gita, shilpa, astronomy, phonetics, semantics** and what else, as *Yatindramata Deepika*, states – a text of 14th Cent. A.D., in the post-epoch of **Sri Vedanta Desika**, who is himself not much well known in this melee!

I have held no partiality, partisanship in my criticism of contrasts, but have been concerned only with **Truth** that has been eclipsed in one or two traditions all through. These are also **ours** in a broader view. Criticism is only for readjustment which is necessary especially in our days of technological innovations of an emerging breath-taking type. Our Hindus abroad are a "Clean Slate". They know neither medievalism nor pure abstraction, mistaken for reality.

This book is mainly meant for such, both here and abroad.

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For further Reading

1. **Vedanta Sutras**	with *Shankara Bhashya* in 2 vols. in the **Sacred Books of the East Series:** *Tr. by* Thibaut, with an exhaustive introduction, a detailed Conspectus of each **Adhikarana** or topic, and contrasting Shankara's views with those of Ramanuja, arriving at the impartial decision that Ramanuja is a better guide to the **Sutras** than Shankara.
2. **Vedanta Sutras**	with *Sri Bhashya* of Sri **Ramanuja**, in a simple sumptuous volume, ***Tr. by*** Thibaut.
3. **Vedanta Sutras**	***Translation into English in 3 volumes by*** Prof. M. Rangacharya (1905), reprinted in Triplicane, Madras
4. **Thirteen Principal Upanishads**	***Tr. into English by*** Hume
5. **Brahma Sutras**	***Tr. by*** Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, with summaries of some important Commentaries and contrasts, with a substantial introduction covering up the entire gamut of the evolution of **Brahmasutra**-thought, and comparison of the ideas from Western thinkers. Radhakrishnan is of the view that Badarayana Vyasa is better understood in the tradition of **Ramanuja**, which is the oldest and earliest to start the interpretations.

6. **Upanishads**:	with **Shankara Bhashya**, Anandagiri's Tika, **Ranga Ramanuja's Bhashyas** in a series covering up **Isha** and seven others in one volume, **Chandogya** in another, **Brihat Aranyaka** in the next, and **Tait Narayaniya** in the last: Pub: G.R. Josyer, Mysore (Telugu script)
7. **Upanishads**:	**Madhva's** Commentaries: Pub: Madhva Mahamandala's Vidya Pitha, Bangalore.
8. **Brahma Sutras**	**Madhva's** Commentaries – 4 vols (Sanskrit), Pub: Historical Research Society, Dharwad
9 **Upanishads**:	with **Ranga Ramanuja's** commentaries in 2 vols. Pub: UbhayaVedanta Granthamala, Notes by Uttamuru Viraraghavachariar Nathamuni Street, Madras
10. **Brihadaranyaka Upanishad**	with **Ranga Ramanuja's** Commentary, **Anandashram,** Poona
11. **All Upanishads**	with **Shankara's** Commentary's in Sanskrit, **Tr. into Kannada by** Swami Sri Satchinandendra Saraswati, (Holenarsipur, Hassan Dist, Karnataka)
12. **Complete works of Ramanuja**	in one vol. Ed, Pub: P.B. Annagarachariyar, Kancheepuram, Tamil Nadu
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24. **Basic Concepts of Visistadvaita**	by K.S. Narayanacharya Pub: Vedavidya Prakashana, Dharwar
25. **Tat Tvam Asi & Neti Neti**	— ,, —

and many others

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Sri Rabidranath Tagore's Prayer

When the heart is hard and parched up, come
upon me with a shower of mercy.

When grace is lost from life, come with a burst
of Song

When tumultous work raises its din on all sides
shutting me out from beyond, come to me
my lord of silence; with thy peace and rest.

When my beggarly heart sits couched, shut up in a corner
break open the door, my king,
and come with the Ceremony of a king.

When desire blinds the mind with delusion and dust,
O thou holy one, thou wakeful
come with thy light and thy thunder.

(From *Gitanjali*, XXXIX)

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Sri Aurobindo on the Upanishadic idea of Immortality, Perfection and God-union

(from *the Life Divine,* p 272-273)

"Again (the self) an eternal portion of the Divine, (*Gita* – XV-7), this part is by the law of the Infinite inseparable from its Divine whole, this part is indeed itself the Whole, except in its frontal appearance, its frontal separative self-experience, it may awaken to that reality and plunge into it to the apparent extinction or at least the merging of the individual existence. A small nucleus here in the mass of our ignorant Nature, so that it is described in the Upanishad as no bigger than a man's thumb, it can by the spiritual influx elnarge itself and embrace the whole world with the heart and mind in an intimate communion or oneness. Or it may become aware of its eternal Companion and elect to live for ever in His presence, in an imperishable Union and oneness as the eternal lover with the eternal beloved, which of all spiritual experiences is the most intense in beauty and rapture...... The psychic transformation, after rising into the spiritual change has then to be completed, integralised, exceeded and uplifted by a supramental transfor-mation which lifts it to the summit of ascending endeavour." "... for it is the Supermind which links the higher and the lower hemispheres of One Existence. In the Supermind is the integrating Light, the consummating Force, the wide entry into the supreme Ananda." [*]

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[*] [In the Tait. *Panchakosha Vidya*, the Vijnanamaya Purusha is the evolving Jiva. It has to reach Anandamaya, beyond the Mind & Body]

About the Author

Born in 1933, and educated at Mysore, (Maharaja's College and Yuvaraja's College), **Sri K.S. Narayanacharya,** populalry known as Ramayanacharya, is a B.Sc. (P.C.M), B.A. (Hons) English, and M.A. (Modern English Literature) coming from an orthodox and devout family of *Vedic* scholars. His Doctoral thesis is on "*The Influence of Indian thought on the poetry of W.B. Yeats and T.S. Eliot.* He has studied the Krishna Yajurveda under the guidance of great masters like the late Dandavati Siva Dixit Somayaji of Dharwad, where he has worked as Professor and Principal of the famed Karnataka Arts College, Karnatak University, for over 32 years as a teacher of English literature. Author of over 70 works in Kannada and English on varied subjects like the *Vedas, Ramayana, Mahabharatha, Bhagavata,* the *Hymns of Alwars, Vedanta, Haridasa literature, D.R. Bendre,* and *Kautilya,* Sri Acharya is a recipient of several State awards like Sangeetha Nritya Academy's 'Karnataka Kala Sri', the Sahitya Academy prize, 'Gamaka Rathnakara' from the State Government, and titles from Religious Heads, like *Veda Bhushana, Valmiki Hridayajna, Pravachana Kalanidhi* and so on. Music, Indology, poetry, discourses, lecture tours are among the abounding interests of the Acharya. He is an invincible debater and a passionate advocate of Hindu values as lasting solutions for the maladies of our society. He is a novelist too, turning our Epics into popular moulds of fiction. His serials in the Kannada weeklies like *Tharanga* and *Karmavira* are very popular and run for months at a stretch. The Acharya is a master of English, Kannada, Sanskrit and Tamil and has lectured all over the country.

For his services to Indian literature and spirituality through works, speech and discourses, the Karnataka State Open University, Mysore has awarded him recently (18th, March, 2005) an Hon D.Litt. Degree. Karnataka State Government has conferred on him the Rajyotsava Prashasthi in 2008.

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